





# A BRIEF SKETCH OF THE ZOROASTRIAN RELIGION AND CUSTOMS

AN ESSAY  
WRITTEN FOR THE  
RAHNUMÂI MAZDAYASNÂN SABHÂ  
OF  
BOMBAY

BY  
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INTRODUCTION  
BY  
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*Third Edition, Revised and Enlarged*

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## PREFACE

### TO THE FIRST EDITION

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The Chairman of the General Committee of the Religious Congresses of the World's Congress Auxiliary in connection with the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893 at Chicago, having communicated to Mr. Dadabhai Navroji, M. P., of London, to seek advice as to the best means of getting Zoroastrian Religion represented in the World's Congress, either by inducing some Zoroastrian scholar to visit the Exhibition personally as a Parsi delegate or, failing that, by procuring some paper on the Zoroastrian Religion to be submitted to the Congress, Mr. Dadabhai advised and directed him to the Râhnumâi Mâzdayasnân Sabhâ, which took occasion to ask their Lecturer, Mr. Sheriarji Dadabhai Bharuchâ to prepare an appropriate paper to

be read at the Congress. The Sabhâ could not have entrusted the task to a better man than Mr. Sheriarji who, besides being an Athornân by birth, has devoted all his life exclusively to the study of the languages and principles of his Religion. Mr. Sheriarji has endeavoured his best within the short time at his command and has produced a work which the Sabhâ's Committee feels confident will be of permanent use not only to strangers to the Religion but to the Zoroastrians themselves.

K. R. CAMA,  
President,  
Râhnumâi Mâzdayasnân Sabhâ.

*Bombay, 19th July 1893.*

# INTRODUCTION TO THE THIRD EDITION

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It is with great pleasure that I have accepted the invitation to write an Introduction to this, the *third* edition of this work, by the late Ervad Sheriarji Dadabhoy Bharucha. The first edition appeared in 1893, and justified the confidence, which the Râhnumâi Mâzdayasnân Sabhâ, under whose auspices it was written, had, that it "will be of permanent use not only to strangers to the Religion but to the Zoroastrians themselves." The great demand for the book necessitated a second edition which was published, revised and enlarged in 1903 by the author himself.

Now this third edition is published as a posthumous work, by his dutiful grandson Mr. Farrokh Erach Bharucha.

The invitation to write this Introduction reminds me of several old associations and reminiscences. It was in the early seventies of the last century that I first met Mr. Sheriarji at the Elphinstone College, which was then situated on the Parel Road opposite the Victoria Gardens. Generally boys of only 16 to 20 years of age, joined our colleges. But Mr. Sheriarji Bharucha was more than twenty-five, a full-bearded man and a full-fledged priest when he joined the College in 1872. But he was more a mature *fresh scholar* than an immature *freshman*. He had studied Avesta, Pahlavi, Persian and Sanskrit at the Sir Jamshedji Jeejeebhoy Zarthosti Madressa. He had also secured a Fellowship and had taught the Avesta language at the Madressa. Besides he had made a name for himself by winning two prizes given in honour of Dr. Haug, Professor of Sanskrit at the Deccan College,

Poona.<sup>1</sup> He won the first prize in 1866 for redacting the Text, Transliteration and Translation with Notes of the Pand-Nâmah-i-Âdarbâd Mârâspand,<sup>2</sup> and the second in 1868, jointly with the late Ervad Tehmuras Dinshah Anklesaria for the Text, Transliteration and Translation with Notes of the Pahlavi Dadestan-i-Dinik.<sup>3</sup>

1. For a brief account of the origin of these prizes *vide* my "Glimpse into the History and Work of the Zarthoshti-Din-ni Khol Karnâri Mandli" (1922), pp. 21-22.

2. "Pand-Namah-i-Âdarbâd Mârâspand or the Book of Counsels by Âdarbâd Mârâspand, being a Prize Essay in the name of M. Haug, Ph. D., comprising the original Pahlavi Text, its Transliteration in Roman as well as Gujarathee characters, a complete translation in Gujarathee and a Glossary in Gujarathee and English of all words occurring in the Text, by Herbad Sheriarji Dadabhoy, Teacher of the Zend language and holder of the Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy Fellowship in the Sir J. J. Zarthosti Madressa, 1869."

૩. "દાદેસ્તાને-દીની યાને દસ્તુર માતુશ્ચેહરે ગોશ્નજમ જેઓ ૨૫૦ ચઝદજરદી, ૮૮૧ ઇસ્વીમાં પારસ અને કેરમાનના વડા દસ્તુર હતા, તેઓએ આપેલા ધાર્મિક ફરમાનના પેહેલવી ઉપરથી તરજુમે।

The whole of the Essay still remains unpublished, but the Translation, revised by his colleague Ervad Tehmuras, together with a brief Introduction by me, was published in 1926, by Mr. Hoshang Tehmuras Anklesaria. Thus Mr. Sheriarji attracted general attention at the Elphinstone College, as a keen Scholar prosecuting his studies as a right leal worshipper of the Goddess of Learning.

I translate here what I have said in dedicating in 1909 one of my publications<sup>1</sup> to him “as a token of my admiration for him as an industrious, honest, bold and learned preceptor, preacher and author”—

“My good and learned friend,

I am your admirer and hold you in respect for several reasons. Nearly 35 years

કરનાર, મહુર્મ એર્વાદ તેહમુરસ દીનશા અંકલેસરીયા, તથા મહુર્મ એર્વાદ શેહેરયારજી દાદાભાઈ ભર્યા. ( ૧૯૨૬ )

૧. જરથોસ્તી ધર્મસંબંધી ભાષણો અને વાચનને, ભાગ ચોથો  
Lectures and Sermons on Zoroastrian Subjects,  
Part IV.

ago, when you, after studying Avesta, Pahlavi, Persian, Sanskrit and other languages, entered the Elphinstone College at an age higher than ordinary Freshmen, your character and habits showed me even then that you were a true lover of learning, a true worshipper of Sarasvati (the Goddess of Learning) and that you had come for worship at the Temple of Learning as a true devotee. A true worshipper does not pray for his own gains alone, but also for the others around him and gives them the benefit of his prayers. Thus, you have benefitted many with the knowledge acquired by you by your worship of the Goddess of Learning.

“ In one of your Lectures before the Rahnumâi Sabhâ you had expressed regret at the absence of pulpits in our Fire-Temples. Since then such pulpits have been introduced to a certain extent in our Fire Temples. You have shown by your good character and studious life what a preacher discoursing from

such pulpits should be.

“As a teacher, preacher, priest and author, you have displayed courage. You have always spoken out what appeared to you to be true and good without caring for public odium or applause ; and by your own example you have taught much good to many in this direction.

“As a brother-student, who sees much good in you, I take the liberty of dedicating to you this small book as an humble token of my regard for your useful, diligent, studious and honest life.”

As an admirer of Mr. Sheriarji, it gives me very great pleasure to introduce this third edition of his essay to the public.

In the Preface to the first edition, written by Mr. K. R. Cama, President of the Râhnumâi Mazdayasnân Sabhâ, the reader will find a brief account of what led Ervad Sheriarji to write this essay. In the published Report of the Parliament of Religions, 1893 (Vol. I, p. 58), the President,



the late Revd. John Henry Barrows, thus takes note of Mr. Sheriarji's active interest in the work of the Parliament :

“ Hon. Dadabhoy Nowrojee, M. P., of London, Jivanji Jamshedji Modi, Dastur Dr. Jamaspji Minocherji Jamasp Asa, M. A., Ph. D., and Ervad Sheriarji Dadabhai Barucha, took active interest in the Parliament and enlisted the co-operation of the Parsees of India.”

An excellent portrait of Mr. Sheriarji has been reproduced in the second volume of the Report (p. 1351). It bears his name and the following extract :

“ The Parsees of India and Persia profess the ancient religion of Zoroaster, the renowned sage and prophet of ancient Persia. While other religions of the ancient world, such as those of ancient Egypt, Chaldea, Assyria, Babylon, Greece and Rome, have disappeared from the face of the earth, this one has survived many disasters and vicissitudes and flourishes still, if not in all its

pristine vigour and glory, yet with many of its distinctive features preserved practically intact."

Unfortunately, no proper attempt was made to send Mr. Sheriarji to the Chicago Session of the Parliament. Had he been sent as a Delegate, no doubt, he would have made an impression there by his deep learning and endearing demeanor.<sup>1</sup>

In the present essay, Mr. Sheriarji has given a brief but comprehensive sketch of the Zoroastrian religion and has added to its value by giving a number of appendices on various subjects which, no doubt, has made his work one "of permanent use not only to strangers to the Religion but to the Zoroastrians themselves." All honour to Mr. Farrokh Erach Bharucha, who, out of filial duty as a worthy grandson of a worthy

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1 *Vide* my "Glimpse into the History and Work of the Zarthoshti Din-ni Khol Karnari Mandli" (1922), p. 65, n. 1, on the subject of the Delegation.

( xiii )

grandfather, has thought it advisable to issue this third edition for a continuance of its " permanent use."

JIVANJI JAMSHEDJI MODI

211, Pilot Bunder Road,  
Colaba, Bombay,

*16th April, 1928.*

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# C O N T E N T S

	PAGE
Preface                   ...       ...       ...       ...	iii
Introduction to the Third Edition                   ...       ...	v
Preliminary remarks                               ...       ...       ...	1
The land of Zoroastrianism                               ...       ...	2
The founder of Zoroastrianism                               ...       ...       ...	3
The Age of Zoroaster                               ...       ...       ...	7
The name borne by Zoroaster's Religion is suggestive of its chief character                   ...       ...       ...	7
The predecessors of Zoroaster                               ...       ...       ...	9
The Zoroastrian Scriptures                               ...       ...       ...	10
The character of God as depicted in the Gâthâs                   ...       ...	16
Zoroaster's exhortations to worship Mazda alone                   ...       ...	18
The six peculiar appellations in the Gâthâs                   ...       ...	20
The probable reason of the preference of these to other names                               ...       ...       ...       ...       ...	21
Angelology originated from these names                   ...       ...	23
How the Yazatas came to be reorganised as sub- ordinate Heavenly Beings                               ...       ...       ...	24
No obscene divinity in Zoroastrianism                   ...       ...	27
The Supreme Godhead of Ahura Mazda never forgotten                               ...       ...       ...       ...       ...	28

	PAGE
Cosmology and Psychology ... ..	30
Time ... ..	31
The object of Creation ... ..	32
The substance of Creation ... ..	32
Cosmogonical notions of the ancient Iranians ...	33
The doctrine of duality ... ..	35
The harm done by this doctrine ... ..	36
Man a compound of material and spiritual parts ...	38
No vicarious salvation ... ..	42
End of the world ... ..	43
The Mazdayasnian Ethics ... ..	44
Virtues ... ..	45
Vices ... ..	55
Sacerdotal order ... ..	62
Worship ... ..	65
Ritual ... ..	66
Fire-temples ... ..	67
Parsis not Fire-worshippers... ..	67
The Navzôt ceremony ... ..	69
Zoroastrian marriage ... ..	72
Zoroastrian funeral ... ..	74
Purificatory laws ... ..	77
Ritual relating to fixed times ... ..	78
Conclusion ... ..	81

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## APPENDICES

### A

	PAGE
The greatest prevalence of Zoroastrianism	... 84
Its first decline      ...      ...      ...      ...	... 85
Its Restoration      ...      ...      ...      ...	... 85
Its final fall      ...      ...      ...      ...	... 86
Exodus of some of its followers into India	... 86
The present number of its followers	... 87
Two sects of its followers      ...      ...      ...	... 87
Resuscitation of the race and religion	... 88
The revival of Zend and Pahlavi studies among the Parsis      ...      ...      ...      ...	... 90

### B

Brief summaries of all parts of the Avesta	... 92
--------------------------------------------	--------

### C

The Pâzend pieces      ...      ...      ...      ...	... 144
The Pahlavi-Pâzend books      ...      ...      ...	... 145
Zoroastrian Apocrypha      ...      ...      ...	... 146
Books on Zoroastrianism written in modern Persian      ...      ...      ...      ...	... 147

### D

A few more passages about Ahura Mazda	... 147
---------------------------------------	---------

### E

A brief account of Spiritual Beings	... 153
Hierarchy of Divine Beings	... 166

	PAGE
The Urvânô or souls and the Fravashis or the spirits of the good ... ..	167
The homage to certain good objects of nature ...	168
Demonology ... ..	169
F	
Proofs of the falsity of regarding Ahriman as the opponent of Ahura Mazda ... ..	171
G	
Free Will <i>versus</i> Fatalism ... ..	173
H	
Some of the prayers accompanied and not accom- panied by ritual ... ..	174
J	
Implements of ritual ... ..	176
K	
The Atash-e-Dâdgâh, the Atash-e-Adrân, and the Atash-e-Behrâm ... ..	177
L	
The Tower of Silence ... ..	179
M	
Names of Gâhs, days, months, and festivals ...	180
Funeral and obsequial ceremonies ... ..	183
Index ... ..	185



## A BRIEF SKETCH OF THE ZOROASTRIAN RELIGION AND CUSTOMS

The Parsis of India and Persia profess the ancient religion of Zoroaster, the renowned sage and prophet of ancient Persia. Preliminary Remarks. While other religions of the ancient world, such as those of ancient Egypt, Chaldea, Assyria, Babylon, Greece and Rome, have disappeared from the face of the earth, this one has survived many disasters and vicissitudes and flourishes still, if not in all its pristine vigour and glory, yet with many of its distinctive features preserved practically intact. In the earlier days of its greatness its adherents were to be counted by millions, and it had a considerable body of renowned literature. But the repeated conquests of Persia by foreigners, are believed to have caused the destruction of a greater part of that literature, hence a few fragments only now remain. Centuries of persecution and oppression, moreover, have considerably reduced the number of its adherents, who are now not more than a mere handful. But small though its literature and insignificant the number

of its followers may be, this religion and the ancient customs of its followers, some of which have been preserved up to this day, possess certain striking and interesting features, which have always raised the admiration and respect of those who have brought a liberal and sympathetic spirit to bear on their study ; while the intelligence, enterprise, and liberality of its followers have again and again been acknowledged in the most emphatic manner. " Of the five great creeds of Asia—" says Frances Cobbe, " Islam, Buddhism, Brahminism, the Confucian and Zoroastrian systems—the last, albeit numbering in our time comparatively a mere handful of adherents, has perhaps the strongest of all claims on our interest." \*

The object sought in this essay is to attempt a brief popular sketch of some of the more important features of this ancient and renowned religion inclusive of a few customs of its followers.

Zoroastrianism flourished originally in the land of  
the ancient Iranians (*Airyáo danhávo*)

The land of which comprised some parts of the  
Zoroastrianism. eastern portion of modern Persia,  
Afghanistan, and certain other ad-

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\* Studies New and Old of Ethical and Social Subjects, by Frances Power Cobbe, p. 91.

jacent districts; and latterly it extended also to the more western and north-western parts of modern Persia, until its influence reached far and wide into Asia Minor and Egypt during the Achæminian and Sassanian periods.

The founder of the religion was the holy *Zarathushtra Spitama* (Zartosht-i-Spitamân) *i. e.* Zoroaster, the descendant of Spitama.

The founder of Zoroastrianism.

In the Gâthâs, the principal part of the Parsi Scriptures, we find Zoroaster appearing so to say actually in flesh and blood preaching and sermonizing, and in one place we meet with the following very interesting and suggestive passage:—"And he asked me: 'Who art thou? Whose art thou? Why hast thou come?'.....Then I replied: 'Firstly, I am Zarathushtra, an avowed and powerful opponent of the wicked, while to the righteous I would prove myself a giver of strong comfort'.....etc."\* This certainly seems to afford very cogent direct evidence of Zoroaster's having been a real and not a mythical personage, though evidence of the times in which he lived must be looked for elsewhere. Not only is there strong internal evidence in the Scriptures of the Parsis establishing this fact, but the works of certain renowned

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\* Yasna XLIII, 7-8.

Greek authors throw sufficient light on the subject. Moreover the myths of ancient times are mainly intended either to describe and demonstrate some natural phenomena or to illustrate some moral truths, but the description of Zoroaster as found in the Gáthâs and the Avesta is certainly not of that character.

Another piece of confirmatory evidence pointing to the same conclusion is furnished by the very name of the great prophet himself and illustrates the ancient custom prevalent among the primeval Iranians of naming persons as the possessors of certain domestic animals. For example Vishtâspa is the acquirer of horses ; Arejataspa, of valuable horses ; Pourushaspa of many horses ; Frashaoshtra of healthy camels, and so on. These admittedly are not fictitious personages and on the same analogy Zarathushtra is the possessor of old or yellow coloured camels. This is the correct etymological meaning of the word Zarathushtra as at present recognised and accepted by scholars.

Zoroaster's father's name was Pourushaspa, his mother's Dogdo. He was born in the province of Rae (Avesta *Ragha*) in the family house of Pourushaspa on the banks of the river 'Dareji' or 'Dargâhidhainish' flowing from the mount of 'Paitizbara'; and though the exact day of his birth cannot be ascertained from the Avesta, the ancient Persian traditions fix it on the

Khordâdsâl day, *i.e.* the sixth day Khordâd of the first month Farvardîn of the Parsi regal year. We have no trustworthy history of his childhood and education. He is said to have married Hvôvî, a relation of his on the mother's side, and is said to have had three daughters Frûnî, Thrîti, and Pouruchisti ; and three sons, Isatvâstra, Urvatatnara, and Hvarechithra. His first disciple was Maidhyomâh, the son of Arâstya, a relation of his on the father's side.<sup>†</sup> His principal coadjutors were Kavi Vishtaspa (Kae Gushtâsp), Frash-aoshtra and Jâmâspa, and Hutaoshâ, the queen of Kae Gushtâsp. The chief opponents he encountered in propagating his new religion were certain persons called Kavis and Karapans, notably those of the family of Usikhsh,† comparable to the Vedic 'Ausij.' He had to suffer much persecution chiefly on account of the religion he was promulgating, attacking and denouncing, as it did, the superstitions and evil customs and practices in vogue, naturally creating alarm and indignation.

Zoroaster combined in himself the threefold character of philosopher, poet, and prophet. His name has been celebrated throughout the civilized world from the most ancient times down to the present day,

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\* Farvardîn Yasht, 95.

† Yasna XLIV. 20.

and the Avesta, the Scriptures of the Parsis, teems with his praises too numerous to be quoted here. Suffice it to say that he is elevated to the exalted rank of 'Aokhtônâmanô Yazata' *i. e.* one whose name is included among the beings worshipped—a distinction conferred only on divine beings and never before upon any other man throughout the Avesta.

It was not given to Buddha or to Christ alone to withstand the temptations held out by the Prince of Evil. Long before the times of these great teachers Zoroaster had undergone that ordeal most successfully. "Again to him (Zarathushtra) said the guileful one, having evil creatures, Angra Mainyu : 'Do not destroy my creatures, O holy Zarathushtra !.....' Renounce the good religion of the worshippers of Mazda and thou shalt gain such a boon as was gained by the son of 'Vadhaghan' (Zohâk) who eventually became the ruler of the nations.' Thus in answer to him said Spitama Zarathushtra : 'No ! never will I renounce the good religion of the worshippers of Mazda, though my body, my life, my soul should burst.' " \*

He is said to have been murdered in the city of Balkh by a Turanian named 'Barâtur' in the seventy-seventh year of his age. The eleventh day Khorshed,

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\* Vendidad XIX. 6-7.

of the tenth month Dae, of the Parsi regal year is still observed by Parsis as the anniversary of the day of his death.

Zoroaster appeared in the time of Gushtâsp, a king of the Kayanian dynasty. It has not been ascertained when this dynasty of the ancient kings of Persia flourished and ended. But that there *was* such a dynasty, and that it ended long before Cyrus the Great founded the Achæminian dynasty about 559 B.C. is certain. And though the exact age of Zoroaster could not be fixed with any degree of certainty, all the evidence of respectable oriental scholars goes to show that it could not have been later than the twelfth century B.C.

The name of Zoroaster's religion as recorded in the Parsi sacred books is "Mazdayasni Zarathustri" that is to say "Mazda-worship," Mazda being the name of God, and promulgated by Zoroaster. It is used in direct opposition to "Daevayasni" or the worship of the *Daevas*. Some of the *Daevas* comprehended under this term are recognized as the Vedic and Ante-Vedic Aryan gods, some of whom were believed to preside over natural objects; while others are supposed to preside over certain evil qualities, etc. It is clear that the re-

ligion of Zoroaster teaches the worship not of many gods but only of the One True God, Mazda. ".....Zî Mazdâonhodâm,"\* says Zoroaster, "Be you the worshippers of Mazda only." "Tôi daêvêng dân yâ dregvatô daênâ"† "They (the oppressors of the world, etc.) follow the Daeva-worshippers, which is the religion of the Wicked one." And accordingly every Zoroastrian professes his faith as follows :—

"Mazdayasnô ahmî" "I am a worshipper of Mazdâ," "Mazdayasnô Zarathustris," "I am a worshipper of Mazda as announced by Zarathustra," "Frawarânô Mazdayasnô Zarathushtris Vidaêvô, Ahura-tkaêshô," "I confess myself to be a worshipper of Mazda, a follower of Zoroaster, an opponent of Daevas (false gods), and subject to the laws of Ahura." The laws of Ahura here referred to are those of the religion of Ormuzd. It is easy to find in the above command and confessions a similarity to the "Kalema" of the Mohammedans in later times which says "There is no god, but Allah, and Muhammed is the Prophet of Allah."

In the Avesta the Mazdayasni Religion as taught by Zoroaster is emphatically termed 'Vanguhi Daêna'

\* Gâthâ II. Hâ 3 para. 1., Yasna XLV. 1.

† Gâthâ III. Hâ 3 para. 4, Yasna XLIX. 4.



( Beh Din ), the Good Religion. And accordingly every follower of this venerable religion calls himself a ' beh-din,' *i. e.* one professing the Good Religion. Several times in the day while renewing his ' pâdyâb-kusti ' ceremony (the untying and retying of the sacred thread ' kusti ' round the waist) he thus confesses his faith in this religion : " I confess the faith of Mazda.....the greatest, best, and most excellent of all religions which now exist and of all that shall in future come into existence, which has been taught by Mazda and preached by Zarathushtra."

The opposition of the Iranians to the Daeva-worshippers is said to have come down from prehistoric times. Long before the advent of Zoroaster several ancient Iranian heroes such as Hoshang, Tehmurasp, Jamshed, and others, are said to have fought against them with more or less success. But it was Zoroaster, who at last succeeded in exterminating the worship of the Daevas from amongst the Iranians.\*

The Zoroastrian Holy Scriptures now extant † are called the Avesta or commonly the Zend-Avesta.

\* Yasna IX, 15. Farwardin Yasht para. 87-95.—(As to the subsequent history of Zoroastrianism see Appendix A.)

† See Appendix B.

Avesta\* means the original Holy Text, and Zend (From The Zoroastrian Av. *Azainti*) its Commentary. They are written in a language which is decidedly the most ancient parent of all Iranian languages, and is commonly, though erroneously, called the Zend. The language is very nearly akin to the Vedic-Sanskrit. The Avesta seem to be a collection of writings composed by several heads in different ages in more than one dialect of the language, and to have been arranged in their present form in later times, chiefly for liturgical purposes. Examined by the light of linguistic and historical research, the Avesta appear clearly divisible into two distinct groups :—

(1) “ The Gâthâs,” or sacred songs, some of them composed by the Prophet Zoroaster himself,† with one or two stanzas occasionally interposed by his chosen and inspired associates and disciples ; and (2) the rest of the Avesta.

It was not long before everything written in the

\* Avesta, from Av. ‘*Afsmânî*,’ a corruption of ‘*paitimâni*,’ measured words or ‘*padâni*’ =Skr. ‘*padâni*’ means either holy verses or a kind of reading the holy texts in which every word is separate and not joined by the rules of sandhi.

† Yasna, chapter LVII., 8.

Avesta language was believed to have been brought down as a whole from heaven by Zarathushtra himself. But by the light of modern research it has become clear that only some portions of the five Gâthâs are the genuine compositions of Zarathushtra Spitama, while the rest of the Avesta are the compositions of high priests in more or less later times after the death of the prophet, his successors in office. The Avesta, as they now stand, consist of the following books :—

(1) The *Yasna*, including the five Gâthâs or Sacred Hymns, (2) the *Visparad*, (3) the *Vendidad*, and (4) the *Khordeh-Avesta*.

The *Gâthâs* are five in number ; their names are (1) *Ahunavaiti*, (2) *Ushtavaiti*, (3) *Spentâmainyû*, (4) *Vohukhshathra*, and (5) *Vahishtëishti*. These names are given to them from the same word occurring at the beginning of each collection. The first collection consists of seven Hâs, literally sections or chapters, the second of four, the third also four, and the fourth and the fifth have only one each. Each Hâ consists of several stanzas of 3, 4, or 5 lines of long or short metres. Their language is archaic and they are the most ancient of all the sacred writings of the Parsis. They teach pure monotheism, some of the noblest conceptions of the Godhead, and the most sublime morality. It is a peculiar characteristic of the Sacred Poems that nearly

every stanza contains one or more names, which are either God's proper name Ahura Mazda or some of the six particular appellatives, called Améshâspentâs, *i. e.* Holy Immortals, with or without the name Ahura Mazda.

The *Yasna*, *i. e.* the book of sacrificial or liturgical prayers to be recited with certain ceremonies, is later than the Gâthâs. The prayers are a collection of seventy-two Hâs or chapters and include all the chapters of the above mentioned five Gâthâs. Some of the non-Gâthic chapters are in prose and others in the later style of poetry.

The *Visparad*, *i. e.* all the chiefs, the invocations of the principal objects in each kind of creation, the principal virtues, etc. consists of twenty-three *kardûs* or chapters. Its language is similar to that of the *Yasna*. It is never recited alone by itself, but its chapters are incorporated here and there in the body and portions of the *Yasna*. These chapters are intended for higher ceremonies. The third chapter is a roll-call of priests, etc. bearing different offices and representing various professions, classes, etc.

The *Vendidad* is a collection of sanitary laws devised to resist the influences of the Daévas or evil, impure, and harmful beings and things. It consists of twenty-two *Fargards* or chapters written dialogically between

Hormuzd and Zoroaster in later prose style. It contains many purificatory, expiatory, punitive and similar sorts of laws. The purification imposed and prescribed is not only of the corporeal human body but also of the various natural elements, Earth, Water, Fire, etc.; also of domestic animals, and all that may have been infected by coming in contact with decomposing dead bodies, putrid matter, etc.

The *Khordeh-Avesta*, i. e. the smaller or minor Avesta or prayers, consist of *Yashts*, *Nyâêshes*, *Afrigâns*, *Gâhs* and other miscellaneous laudations.

There are in all twenty-two yashts. A *yasht* is a composition in praise, invocation and appreciation of a *yazata*, i. e. a holy being worthy of homage, as *Khurshed* (the sun), *Mâh* (the moon), *Avân* (waters), and so on. Originally a yasht seems to have been intended for recitation at a particular sacrificial feast held in honour of the holy being whose name it bore and whose great deeds were to be remembered and celebrated there; and was probably accompanied by some sacrificial ceremony, as the word 'yasht' like the name '*yasna*' suggests. But in this age the yashts are recited without any accompanying ceremony, whereas the *Yasna* is never performed without ceremonies.

A *nyâêsh* is a small composition to be recited in praise of one or other of the five great natural creations,

*viz. Khurshed* (the sun), *Meher* (light preceding the rising of the sun), *Mâhbalhtâr* (the moon), *Atash* (fire), and *Avân-arduisur* (waters). They are, therefore, five in number. Each *nyâêsh* is generally recited standing before, in the presence of or at least facing the object whose name it bears and whose praises are sung in it. They are recited either privately by one's self or publicly in certain congregational assemblies.

*Afrigâns* are certain small chapters mostly extracted from the bulk of the Avesta to be recited in certain congregations called 'Myazd.' They are more or less intended to give brief descriptions of the occasion of the gathering. Their style is generally of praise and blessings. They are six in number and are recited chiefly by priests with trays containing fruit, wine, milk, flowers, etc. placed before them, which are afterwards partaken and shared by the whole of the congregation with due solemnity.

*Gâhs* are very small pieces containing simple praises or invocations of invisible chiefs believed to preside over the five parts or watches into which, according to the Avestic system, the time of day and night is divided.

Of the miscellaneous pieces the most important is the '*nirang-e-kusti*' *i. e.* the prayer to be recited at the time of untying and retying the sacred girdle. It is

repeated as a preparatory formula reminding the reciter to remain steadfast on the path of religion and duty. Every Zoroastrian recites it several times a day, as occasion offers, for example, in the morning, before every prayer, before any ceremony, etc. and after having returned from natural calls. Each time it is preceded by previous washing of the uncovered portion of the body such as face, hands, and feet.

All the parts of the non-Gâthic Avesta, some of them whole and others fragmentary, though probably written by several persons at different times after Zoroaster, are undoubtedly prior to the time of the Achæminians (B. C. 559-329).

In the later times, probably the Sassanian, in order to make at least the important points of old Avestic recitations intelligible to the reciter, several compositions in the Pâzend language were added to the old Avestic ones. They are current among the Parsis.\*

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\* See Appendix C.

The name of God in the Avesta is simply Mazda or Ahura-Mazda. His character as depicted in the Gâthâs of Zoroaster and also in most of the subsequent writings of the Avesta and Pâzend, is the highest and noblest conception of spiritual sublimity. He is represented as the Creator,<sup>1</sup> the Supporter,<sup>2</sup> and the absolute Ruler<sup>3</sup> of the universe; the Maker<sup>4</sup> of the sun, the moon, the stars, the heaven, the earth, the waters, the trees, the winds, the clouds, the man; the Producer<sup>5</sup> of the day and night; without beginning,<sup>6</sup> and without end<sup>7</sup>; All-pervading,<sup>8</sup> All-wise, All-powerful; the Righteous, the Undeceivable<sup>9</sup>; Sole worthy of worship,<sup>10</sup> the Highest, the Greatest<sup>11</sup>; the Best; the Infallible Rewarder of all good deeds,<sup>12</sup> the greatest Increaser<sup>13</sup>; All-seeing<sup>14</sup>; the Holiest, the Mightiest<sup>15</sup>: the great Consoler<sup>16</sup> in

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|-------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| 1. Yasna XLIV, 7; XXXI, 8-11; LI, 7; etc. | 9. Yasna XLIII, 6; XLV, 4.             |
| 2. Yasna XLIV, 4.                         | 10. Yasna XXXI, 8; XXXIV, 6; XLIII, 8. |
| 3. Yasna XLIII 1.                         | 11. Yasna XXVIII, 5; XLV, 6.           |
| 4. Yasna XLIV, 3-4.                       | 12. Yasna XLIII, 5: XXXI, 8.           |
| 5. Yasna XLIV, 5.                         | 13. Yasna XXXIII, 12.                  |
| 6. Yasna XXXI, 8.                         | 14. Yasna XXXI, 13.                    |
| 7. Yasna XXXI, 7; XLIII, 6.               | 15. Yasna XXIX, 3.                     |
| 8. Yasna XXXI, 12-13; XLV, 4.             | 16. Yasna XXIX, 1-7; XLVI, 2.          |



distress ; the greatest Helper<sup>1</sup> of the helpless ; the most Beneficent<sup>2</sup> ; the most Merciful<sup>3</sup> ; the Strongest<sup>4</sup> ; the Giver of strength<sup>5</sup> ; the Protector<sup>6</sup> ; Nourisher<sup>7</sup> ; the Giver<sup>8</sup> of victory ; etc., etc.

In the *Hormazd yasht* which is specially composed in praise of Ahura Mazda, several attributes of Him are described. Even in the Pahlavi-Pazend books the titles and attributes of Ahura Mazda present the most sublime and exalted character of His godhead. We give a few of them.

Omniscient (Visp-âkâs or Harvispa-âkâs=Harvispa-âgâh) ; Supreme in omniscience (hâlist pavan Harvasp-âkas) ; Omnipotent (Visp-tûbân) ; the Supreme Sovereign or Omni-sovereign (Vispa-Khûdâi) ; Supreme Good or All-good (Vispa-veh) ; All-beneficent (Vispân-sût) ; All in all (Vispân-vispa) ; etc.

In one chapter of the Dinkard there is a peculiar panegyric of the Creator Ahura Mazda as follows :—

“ Sovereign and not subject ; father and not progeny ; by himself and not descended from ; master and not servant ; chief and not under a chief ; possessor

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1. Yasna xxix, 10-11.

2. Yasna xxxiii, 11.

3. Yasna xxxiii, 11.

4. Yasna xlvi, 4.

5. Yasna xxxiii, 12.

6. Yasna xlvi, 4 ; xlvii, 7 ; i, 1.

7. Yasna xlv, 3 ; xlvii, 2.

8. Yasna xlv, 15.

and not indigent ; protector and not protected ; firm and immaculate ; possessing in himself living knowledge and not through any medium ; disposing and not disposed ; distributing but not receiving anything ; giving ease to others and not receiving it from them ; giving co-operation but not receiving co-operation ; esteeming and not in need of estimation from others ; directing and not directed.” \*

We find also in other writings similar indications of His sublime character, which prove that the honour and dignity of the godhead of Ahura Mazda is fully upheld and maintained in the Zoroastrian sacred writings throughout all ages.

In the third Hâ of the second Gâthâ (Yasna XLV.), Zoroaster's exhortations to of Zoroaster to worship Ahura Mazda Mazda and him alone. The following are a few lines from that most impressive of Zoroaster's sermons :—

“ Now will I proclaim to you, give ear unto me,  
 now hear, Ye who look from near or afar,  
 It has been now all revealed (to me). Verily be ye  
 the worshippers of the Most Wise,  
 So that the evil-doctrined one may not again spoil  
 the world,

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\* See Appendix D.

He the wicked one who has caused tongues dis-  
believing with an evil faith

.....

Not to be deceived is the All-pervading Lord.

.....

Now I proclaim to you the Most High of all.

Praise with righteousness (Him), who is the Giver  
of good.....

And let the Wise Lord hear it through the holy spirit.

.....

Him only choose thou for our praises of salutation,  
(For) verily now I have transparently seen Him  
with my (mental) eyes,

Of good mind, word, and deed,

The Knower with righteousness, Him the Wise Lord.

Let us deposit His adorations in the house of purity.

Him only propitiate with our good mind,

Who has made us content (who is our consoler)  
both in felicity and distress ;

So that the Wise Lord working with might would  
make

Our cattle and brave men to prosper,

Until (there come to us) good knowledge of the  
good mind with righteousness.

Him only offer sacrifice with the worship of pious  
thought,

Who has been sung with the proper name of Ahura  
 Mazda (the Wise Lord),  
 Since He gives through good mind and righteousness  
 In His kingdom His fulness and immortality,  
 To everyone of those who would give power and  
 strength (to the helpless)."

Many more passages occur in the Gâthâs which go a long way to prove that Zoroaster proclaimed pure Theism to the world long before the prophets of other nations appeared.

Besides many other sublime attributes, some of which we have enumerated above, applied to Ahura Mazda, He moreover is in the Gâthâs addressed or spoken of along with other six peculiar appellations called the Ameshâ-spentâs, *i.e.* the Holy Immortals, thus making, as it were, a rosary of seven Holy Names. These names with their literal meanings are as follows :-

*Ahura Mazda*, the Living Wise or the Wise Lord.

*Vohu Manô*, the Good Mind.

*Asha Vahishta*, the Best Order or the Excellent Holiness.

*Kshathra Vairya*, the Absolute, the approved Power.

*Spenta Armaiti*, the Beneficent Love, the holy Obedience, Perfection.

*Haurvatât*, the Wholeness.

*Ameretât*, the Immortality.

The last six are abstract epithets, which together with the first concrete proper name, Ahura Mazda, constitute so to say the text of a sacred recital for use by day and by night, and make up a seven-sided picture of all-pervading effulgence always present to the internal and external vision and at every time exalting, ennobling, and illumining the mind.

It is a peculiar characteristic of the Zoroastrian

The probable reason of the preference of these to other names. Gâthâs that their author, probably imitating some former Aryan poet, has chosen to address his object of homage, the only One God, along with these peculiar designations.

This may perhaps be accounted for by the mystic efficacy attributed to the number 'seven' among the ancient Iranians. But it is obvious that these seven names denote the seven most sublime characteristics of Mazda. In selecting these from among the other innumerable divine attributes, Zoroaster apparently intended to impress the most original and striking of these attributes on the human mind, incapable as it is of itself of comprehending all the infinite attributes of Divinity. Seeing that the one Supreme First Cause of all was most wisely ruling everywhere in the

invisible or visible worlds—matter, mind, or spirit,—always with benevolence, perfect right order and holiness, omnipotence, benevolent love and everlastingness, Zoroaster chose these seven high and philosophical religious abstractions as the fittest attributes by which to celebrate Him. And accordingly he composed his sacred poetry of the Gâthâs in a peculiar style, which is characterised by the recurrence of one or more of these seven names in nearly every stanza or line of his Gâthâs, the more readily and forcibly to impress them on the mind. He seems to have had recourse to this characteristic style of writing, so that the conception and divinity of God may be ever present to the mind of his followers. Having arrived at the conclusion that the First Great Cause over all was ruling the universe most wisely, he called Him by the proper name of Mazda, *i. e.* the Wise. He saw that the invisible and the visible worlds were pervaded by His benevolence. Therefore he employed the name Vohu Manô, the Benevolent Mind. As the invisible and the visible worlds were subject to His law of right order and holiness, he used Asha Vahishta, the Best Order or the Excellent Holiness. To illustrate the rule of the invisible and the visible worlds by His absolute power, he employed Kshathra Vairya, *i. e.* the Absolute Power. The exhibition by the invisible and the visible worlds

in all directions of his beneficent love naturally prompted the appellation of Spenta Armaiti, the Beneficent Submissive Mind ; and because the First Cause pervaded the infinite space, he chose the word Haurvatât, the Wholeness, Infinity. Seeing that the First Cause always existed and will exist for ever, he employed Ameretât, the Immortality. Thus the seven names of Ameshâ-spentâs, *i. e.* the Holy Immortals, are symbolical of the attributes of the One Infinite and Eternal, in whom is centred all existence visible or invisible.

Ignorance or oversight of the real meaning and connotation of these highly abstract philosophical notions gave rise, in later times, to the conception, that these seven constructed a sort of a council of seven heavenly beings, six of them being archangels, with Ahura Mazda as their head.

This in course of time led to a revival of the old belief in the existence of several Aryan nature gods as well as some other gods supposed to preside over certain abstract good qualities and virtues ; all, including archangels, being embraced in the general appellation of *Yazatas*, as subordinate angels under the supremacy of Ahura Mazda Himself.

The Gâthâs show very clearly that Spitama Zara-

How yazatas came to be reorganized as subordinate heavenly beings.

thushtra preached and inculcated a pure monotheistic creed based on the quintessence of morality, Asha, divided into the three sublime heads of good thoughts, good words, and good deeds, and he denounced all forms of evil and immorality, Druj, summarized under the three heads of evil thoughts, evil words, and evil deeds.—The Gâthâs, moreover, illustrate another striking peculiarity of this religion differentiating it from some of the other great religions of the world. While busily engaged in propagating his religion, Zoroaster, did not neglect or despise the study of nature and man, but earnestly prosecuted and promoted it. He shows himself an earnest and devoted student of the Natural Sciences and Metaphysics, and anxious to solve and penetrate into some of the mysteries which have taxed and baffled the powers of some of the greatest philosophers of all ages.\*—Another peculiarity of his teaching is his earnest exhortation to his followers not to take any dogma or doctrine on trust, or yield a blind and unreasoning submission thereto, but to derive personal conviction by careful and calm examination of everything by the light of the well ordered good, earnest and sincere mind

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\* Yasna, Hâ, XLIV.



and then accept or reject it as it directs. He says :  
 “ Hear with your ears the best (sayings), see with your clear mind the beliefs of (your) choice, every man or woman to think for his or herself.”\*—He emphatically denounces the worship of many gods and advocates unflinching adherence and submission to the worship of the One Ahura Mazda, the Wise Lord.†—A still more striking feature of the essentially practical and ennobling character of the Zoroastrian religion is its doctrine of Rewards and Punishments in the next world. Somewhat varying from the teaching and practice of other religious systems of antiquity, Zoroastrianism lays down in the clearest and most unequivocal terms that everyone has to be so to say the architect of his own salvation and will have to be judged, rewarded, or punished solely according to his own deeds in this world irrespective and independent of the merits of any intervening medium or saviour. His shall be the reward of Paradise or the punishment of perdition according as he is or is not able to give a good account of doings of his own in this life.‡

And yet notwithstanding the influence of these noble and sublime sentiments and tenets, it appears from the

\* Gâthâ I. Hâ III. 2, Yâsna XXX, 2.

† Yasna, Hâ XLV.

‡ Yasna XLIII, 5.

rest of the Avesta that after the death of the Prophet, the monotheistic purity of his teaching had not been maintained in its pristine glory and simplicity. In the succeeding centuries objects of nature instead of being regarded, as Zoroaster had taught, as only created things of Mazda, serving as mere symbols of God's greatness and might, gradually came to be regarded as objects themselves deserving of worship, each presided over by a special god as it used to be believed in the pre-Zoroastrian times, and hence in course of time was established a hierarchy of Ameshâ-spentâs and yazatas, *i. e.* good spirits chief and minor ones worthy of homage, as subordinate heavenly beings, a conception wholly foreign and opposed to the doctrines which Zoroaster had preached with such lucidity and earnestness. Hence every angel—either Ameshâ-spenta or Yazata, also called Izad in later languages—was supposed to be a minor divinity presiding over a certain beneficent natural object or an abstract conception and bearing a name of corresponding significance. For example, *Atar* meant both physical fire as well as the divinity presiding over it. In the later Avesta homage is rendered to both of them just as it was afterwards among the ancient Greeks and Romans and just as is done now among the Hindus. For example, a sacred river as well as the deity presiding over it, bearing the same name,

receive similar homage. The same remark applies to other conceptions and qualities. For example *Daëna* is the name both of religion and the deity supposed to be presiding over it ; *Māthra* is both a sacred formula or formulæ as well as the deity presiding over them. \*

Here a noteworthy feature of this religion deserves attention. Though the later Iranians, like the ancient Greeks, Romans, and Hindus, distinguished the object and the deity supposed to preside over it by the same appellation, no impure object and no obscene deity has ever disfigured the Zoroastrian sacred writings of any age or time. It is naturally so, because of the peculiar characterisation of Zoroastrianism that it persistently inculcates upon its followers perpetual warfare against evil and enjoins undying resistance to every kind of evil, physical or moral. the whole life of a pious Zoroastrian is or ought to be consecrated to a sustained crusade against Angromainyush, the evil spirit, and all his evil brood. This doctrine is at the root of the system of religion which so eloquently and emphatically preaches to its followers to lead an active life

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\* See Appendix E.

ever militating against evil on the one hand and constantly promoting the welfare and happiness of mankind on the other.

In the ancient Iranian world Zoroaster alone seems to be the first to have taught pure, unmixed monotheism which, owing to the later deteriorating accretions, came to be reduced into what may be called a kind of polytheism. Yet even in the later times it had not failed to preserve its essential pristine purity and sublimity. 'Varuna' (Gr. 'Ouranos' heaven), the ancient heaven god of the Aryans, although he seems at times to have been praised in the Vedas in a monotheistic strain as Mazda is praised in the Zoroastrian Gâthâs, had to be gradually brought lower down from his high dignity to an equality with inferior gods. We meet with one or two parallels of this in the later Avesta also. 'Mithra' (Vedic, 'Mitra', an associate of Varuna) is in the later Avesta associated with Ahura Mazda almost as his equal. Yet to mark his inferiority and subordination to Mazda it is expressly stated there that 'Mithra' was *created* by Him.\* Also in the Vendidad and in a few other places 'Angromainyush' (Ahriman) is spoken of as an opponent to Ahura

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\* Mihir Yasht, 1.

Mazda. But he is nowhere represented as in any way His equal. Striving to oppose Ahura Mazda, he is always an unequal and impotent opponent. In two or three later yashts Ahura Mazda is represented as revering the inferior yazatas.\* Excepting these two or more isolated references obviously founded on misconception in the later writers, we always find in the whole of the Zoroastrian literature—whether ancient or modern, Ahura Mazda ever coming out successful over his antagonist Angromainyush and thus preserving His supreme divinity and authority. His attributes are always pure and ennobling and abhorrent of evil, in striking contrast with the notions about the Deity elsewhere prevalent.

It was only in consequence of the later accretions and excrescencies in the shape of the personified entities of the different phases of good and evil in the material and moral world, wholly absent and unknown in the authentic utterances of the prophet Zoroaster contained in his writing of the Gâthâs and foreign to the spirit and scope of his commands, as well in consequence of the disregard and the failure of the correct conception of the origin and aims of these developments, that in later times the pure monotheism

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\* *e. g.* Aban Yasht, 17 &c.

of his religion came at a time to be shrouded with polytheistic notions and ideas and to give rise to the fallacy of the Zoroastrian religion being in its origin polytheist. But thanks to the researches of modern scholars the essential and fundamental principles of the religion have been distinguished from and raised superior over the later foreign accretions that grew round them in course of ages and for a while threw the right principles in the background; and it may confidently be asserted that in the progress of times scholarship will serve yet more conspicuously to reveal and bring into prominence the real philosophical monotheism of Zoroaster.

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We have no books extant treating systematically of  
 Cosmology and Psychology, and such  
 other cognate subjects from which  
 we might be enabled to learn the  
 extramundane philosophy prevalent among the ancient  
 Iranians. Rare explanations on these subjects are  
 available scattered here and there in the references  
 made in and the inferences deducible from the existing  
 Gâthâs, Avesta, and other reliable sources.

In the Avesta we meet with two expressions, viz.

Time. 'Zravan Akarana' and 'Zravan Dareghô-Khvadhîta.' The first means Time without bound, *i.e.* Eternity, and the second signifies Time with long periods, *i.e.* a portion of time carved out of Eternity. The last expression, therefore, is restricted to mean a cycle of time. What the state of the universe in its bygone cycles was or how many cycles and of what length have elapsed since the creation is not referred to anywhere in the Gâthas or the Avesta, which treat of the present current cycle only.

It was the generous desire of Ahura Mazda that His might, wisdom, and goodness should be employed in promoting the happiness and enjoyment of mankind in a world of beauty here below in this world, thus enabling them to play a worthy part in this existence and thence to take a flight to enjoy an exalted and noble life in the next world.\* This then might be regarded as the ultimate end and aim of the creation of the world. Ahura, therefore, commenced the work of creation and it was from that moment that the present cycle began with its series of productions to be continued upto its end.†

Every production must have a material and an

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\* Yasna XXXI, 7-11 ; XLIII, 5.

† Yasna XXX, 3-10 ; XLV, 2-5.

efficient originator. The efficient cause of the world was evidently the substance of creation. Ahura Mazda, and He is therefore called 'Dâtar' (= Dâdâr), the Maker, the Producer, the Creator. He produced us (yô nô dadha) and gave form to every creation (yô tatasha). What he first brought forth must have been the atoms, the particles which he put into the shape of creation. From this we infer that Zoroastrianism does not support the belief or doctrine of creation *ex nihilo*, but it teaches us that the material impetrative cause of the world was likewise supplied by the Efficient original cause Himself.

In the Gâthâs of Zoroaster we do not meet with any details concerning the serial order and succession of creation, but the later Avesta furnish some hints. According to these, at first there were created the spiritual or the invisible creations (manaspaoirya dâmân, or mainyava stish) and after them followed the corporeal or visible creations (asma-paoirya dâmân or gaêthya stish.) The succession of the latter seems to be hinted at in the nineteenth chapter of Yasna as follows: the sky, the waters, the earth, the vegetable world, the animal world, and last of all human beings. This order of creation of the material world seems to bear some resemblance to the modern scientific theory of Evolution.



It was also from the first moment of the present cycle that the two opposing principles, *viz.* Cosmogonical Spento-mainyush or Vohu Manô, *i.e.* notions of the ancient Iranians. the Blissful Mind or Spirit, and Angromainyush or Akem Manô, *i.e.* the Noxious Mind or Spirit, came into operation. The first may be conceived as bright and full of order, the second as dark and causing disorder; the former tending to growth, increase, good thought, good speech, good action, good aspiration, good intellect, good life and religion, and the latter to destruction, decrease, evil thought, evil speech, evil belief and evil religion, evil action, unholy aspiration, evil intellect, and these two principles were intended to pervade all productions, the good one causing order and happiness and the other antagonist disorder and misery. Hence our sublunary world has become a battle-ground so to say for the two opposite principles of good and evil and hence the concurrent existence of good and evil side by side in this world. All that is bright, life-sustaining, beneficial, holy, good, and virtuous, owes its existence and sustenance to the preponderance of the beneficent qualities of Spento-mainyush. While all that is dark, life-destroying, injurious, bad and vicious, is occasioned by the preponderance of the influence of Angromainyush,

All creation thus spoiled by the plague of Angromanyush, has to be purified, renovated, and restored to its pristine purity by the agency of human beings. This is the work expected by his Lord from man, and as a reward of this accomplishment his honour and dignity will be elevated in this as well as in the life to come. He has reason to be thankful that he is allowed free opportunity of work and enjoyment and of bettering his state by going through the experiences of good and evil and choosing the former in the world, and of finally receiving his reward. To enable him to work out this result Ahura Mazda in His omniscience furnished him from the first with reason, conscience and free will, and revealed the precepts of the True Religion in the earliest times, and provided for a continuance of the enlightenment and edification of the world by the teaching and practising of the religion taught by Saoshyants, *i.e.* the great benefactors. This religion taught mankind to appeal to Him for help in times of difficulty and danger and to expect solace and comfort from Him in their distress and troubles. It has taught men that patience and resignation to His will in misfortunes, and unflinching devotion to the cause of righteousness, and unceasing warfare against every kind of evil, would eventually bring them proper reward ; and these doctrines were enforced from early

times and notably by Saoshyants, and their observance continued upto the time of Zoroaster who proved their greatest exponent and advocate. These truths will always be upheld during all ages and times, until at the end of the present cycle the good principle will come out glorious and triumphant, and the evil principle being entirely annihilated, the world will be purified.

This is a short sketch of the cosmogonical notions of the ancient Iranians. It exemplifies the fierce and unceasing struggle between good and evil, the temptations to tread the path of evil, the difficulties in the way of pursuing a life of purity and virtue, the alternations of hope and despair, the temporary triumph of sin over virtue, ending however in the ultimate overthrow of evil; and it serves as a complete, though succinct, exposition of moral philosophy of a most ennobling character.

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This opposition of the two principles of good and evil doubtless gave rise to the belief in Dualism, and led to the identification of Spentomainsyush, the principle of good, with Ahura Mazda Himself, and to the belief that the world was created and governed by two Gods each independent of the other, the one good and the other evil, the one the creator and the other

the destroyer. We have already seen that this error was of later growth, and was occasioned by a misconception of the original doctrine of Good and Evil. The Gáthâs and even some parts of the later Avesta, indeed so far from suggesting any such theory distinctly negative, disprove it and furnish convincing inductions of the monotheistic character of the Zoroastrian religion.\*

Notwithstanding this, it must be acknowledged that, on account of this egregious mistake  
 The harm done on the part of some of the later  
 by this doctrine. Zoroastrians themselves of identifying one of these two principles, the good one, with Ahura Mazda Himself, they have invited the undeserved stigma of believing in the absurd doctrine of two eternal principles distinct from and antagonistic to each other. It should not be confounded with the original essential and fundamental principle of the Zoroastrian religion which is based upon pure monotheism.

Even the same misconception, which gave rise to the doctrine of Dualism above adverted to, seems in still later times to have led to erroneous speculations as to the single prime cause of the universe which, according

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\* See Appendix F.

to the Zoroastrian religion, is the Supreme and Eternal Being, Mazda himself. A belief gradually sprung up, especially during the Sassanian period, that 'Zrvāna Akarana,' the Infinite Time, was the first original principle ; others again thought that 'Bakht' or 'Bareh,' *i. e.* Destiny, was the prime cause of all. But thanks to the accurate study of the Gāthās and the Avesta, it has been satisfactorily established that these beliefs were as erroneous as the conception of two antagonistic gods, and that the doctrine of two eternal gods and over them the Infinite Time or Destiny is wholly foreign and opposed to the true religion which Zoroaster has taught and according to which Ahura Mazda alone is the single Eternal Supreme Cause of all, who has been, is, and shall for ever be, co-extensive with the Infinity of Space and co-existent with the Infinite Time.

While many Asiatic religious and philosophical systems inspire and encourage a belief in the power of Destiny and Fate, and represent these as having been instrumental in producing the universe and governing the affairs not only of man but also of gods, and teach men to believe in the influence of stars and planets on human affairs, Zoroastrianism is wholly free from such delusive teaching. But, in the later Sassanian times, the influence of the baneful idea, derived from close

contact with the neighbouring religions, seems to have made itself felt among the followers of Zoroaster and to interfere with the orthodox belief in the supremacy of Ahura Mazda and the doctrine of free will. To counteract the mischievous tendency of these influences, the thoughtful leaders of the Mazdayasnian religion seem to have favoured a policy of practical compromise and to have taught that steady industry and strong will and determination will enable men to ward off and escape dangers which otherwise would befall him, and that a life of sin and unrighteousness will bring about evils from which he would otherwise have been free, in no less degree than the intervention of the Almighty Being.\*

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As to the constitution of man, he is represented as a compound of several physical and psychological parts. In other words  
 Mana a compound of material and spiritual parts. he is of a treble nature, material, vital, and spiritual,—body, life, and soul. His spiritual parts are immortal. They were created before his material and vital parts. They combine with his physical parts at his birth and separate at his death. His physical and vital parts are well-known,

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\* See Appendix G.

such as 'tanu' (=Pers. tan) the body, 'gaya' and 'ushtëna,' (=Pers. jân) life, with their several subdivisions. Of his spiritual parts the principal are 'urvan' (Pers. ravân) the soul, and Fravashi, the spirit, with their several faculties, such as 'manas' the mind, 'baodhas' consciousness, and so on. The living body (tanu) is to Urvan, the soul, and to Fravashi, the spirit, what an instrument is to the worker, or the horse to the rider, or the house to its master. The body with its vital force is formed in the womb of the mother and the soul and spirit, coming from the spiritual world bringing along with them the several faculties and mental powers, enter it and begin their sublunary career which lasts till death, when they return to the spiritual world. The soul can best perform his duties, if the body be in full health. And as the health of the body is affected by its physical and vital surroundings, Zoroastrianism enjoins the duty of preserving and maintaining the health of the body. The maxim "*mens sana in corpore sano*" may truly be said to be a distinctive feature of this renowned religion.

Of the spiritual parts of man the most important are only two : (1) the Urvan and (2) the Fravashi. The Urvan or soul is responsible for deeds done in the flesh. It is he who according to his doings receives reward or

punishment after death. On the dawn of the fourth day after his death, his actions having been judged and appraised favourably, he enters the spiritual world and from that time all his connection with this material world ceases and he is never afterwards allowed to return to it. Zoroastrianism does not teach the doctrine of Ghosts and Goblins, the soul hovering about the nether world "Doomed for a certain term to walk the night, and for the day confined to fast in fires." Nor does it profess or inculcate metempsychosis. In the Gâthâs of the prophet Zoroaster as well as in several other parts of the Avesta, all that is said as to the ultimate destination of the soul after the shuffling off of the mortal coil, is that it enters heaven or hell according to the preponderance of his good or bad deeds and commences the next, second, life.

The Fravashi is a notion not once mentioned in the Gâthâs, but it occurs in the other Avesta writings. It seems to mean a peculiar invisible part conceived to be in every existence, animated or inanimated, and helping to constitute it as such. The word being of the feminine gender, it is believed to be a feminine spiritual helpmate directing the soul to pursue the right course in every respect, such as in guarding, developing, and taking care of the body, in warding off many kinds of perils, in fighting against all sorts of evils both



physical and moral, and so on. She is considered a sort of loving friend of 'urvan' the master, or as a wise minister to the king 'urvan.' Nothing is ever said of the Fravashi of the wicked soul. But the Fravashi of the holy soul is honoured as a holy spirit and her help is invoked like that of any other heavenly being. She being only the helper or the guardian spirit of the soul, is of course not responsible for his deeds and is not to receive any reward or punishment. The Fravashi seems to have existed, like the Platonic "ideal," before the individual who was to be put under her charge was created. She is believed to be employed in guarding the creations of Ahura Mazda against the evils of Angromainyush, until the time of her destined work arrives, when she enters the body with the Urvan, and after death separates herself. She may be considered as piloting the ship of the soul's career in the stormy ocean of this life safe to the harbour of heaven, if the soul acts according to her guidance.

Zoroastrianism teaches that God has provided the human soul with every kind of apparatus to enable him to perform his work successfully. The following are a few of them : 'khratu' energy, knowledge ; 'chisti', consideration, wisdom ; 'ushî' (=hōsh), intelligence, perception, sense ; 'manas,' mind, thought ; 'vachas,'

speech ; 'shkyaothna,' action ; 'vasó' or 'kâma' (kâmkhûtai), free will ; 'daêna,' religious animated conscience ; 'Ahu,' practical conscience ; 'Fravashi,' the prototype in nature and in man, the guiding spirit ; 'baodhas,' consciousness, memory, etc. ; over and above them 'Daênâ' the vision, the revealed religion.

The soul having been thus furnished with every necessary appliances, he is expected to come out successfully in his moral career and get his reward. But if he fails, he cannot ask for or expect a vicarious salvation, which is unknown in the Zoroastrian religion.

In the Gâthâs of Zoroaster we meet but with only a few general hints about the state of the soul after death. Briefly stated they are these. The soul of the virtuous crosses the Bridge or the Ford of 'Chinvat,' the discerning ground, enters the house of purity and eternal joy and light (Garô demâna), has every want and wish satisfied, and enjoys there the happiness of the company of holy emancipated souls. On the other hand the soul of the wicked, reaching at the foot of the same bridge, descends down in to the house of impurity and utter darkness, is confronted and reproached by his conscience, bemoans his state, and utters bemoaning cries. These Gâthic conceptions of retributive justice and a system of divine rewards and punishments

received considerable development in later times, and the abstract principles living so long fossilised into concrete and essential shapes. The reward and punishment assigned to the souls of the righteous and to those of the wicked is to last till 'Frashô-kereti' or 'Farshegard,' *i. e.* the renovation of the world when the whole creation is to start afresh, or 'Ristâkhêz,' *i. e.* resurrection of the dead.

This event is to be synchronous with the end of the present cycle. Then will arise the last of the Saoshyants. He will consummate the work of purifying and regenerating the world and completely removing every evil effect of the work of Angromainyush. All the souls of the wicked will be brought out from hell, and will be purified, being forgiven at the termination of their sentence. The souls of the righteous too will rise and there will be brought about 'Ristâkhêz,' *i. e.* the rising of the dead, the resurrection. Thenceforth the world will enter upon a new cycle, free from all evil and misery, ever young ever rejoicing. All souls will be furnished with new bodies called 'tan-i-pasin,' the after-day body, the future body, and will commence to enjoy a life of ineffable bliss and glory. "Then he (the Saoshyant) shall restore the world, which will (thenceforth) never grow old and never die, never

decaying and never rotting, ever living and ever increasing and master over its wish, when the dead will rise, when life and immortality will come, and the world will be restored at (God's) wish."\*

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Since the salvation of man is made to depend solely and entirely upon his own exclusive efforts and deeds, it becomes his peremptory duty to lead a pious, holy life and to think, speak, and act righteously. The Mazdayasnian religion thus prescribes and enjoins a sublime code of ethics.

All morality is divided into three great classes, (1) *Humata*, good thought, (2) *Hûkhta*, good word and (3) *Huvarshta*, good deed. Similarly there are three categories of immorality (1) *Dushmata*, evil thought, (2) *Duzhûkhta*, evil word, and (3) *Duzhvarshta*, evil deed. "All good thoughts, words, and works are done with wisdom. All evil thoughts, words, and works are done without wisdom. All good thoughts, words, and works lead to paradise. All evil thoughts, words, and works lead to hell. To all good thoughts, words, and works (belongs) Paradise—so (is it) manifest to the pure." † "Henceforth let me stand firm for good

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\* *Zamyâd Yasht*, 89.

† *Vispa Humata*.

thoughts, good words, and good deeds, which must be well thought, must be well spoken, and must be well done. I hold fast to all good thoughts, good words, and good deeds." \*

It may not be out of place here to enumerate and briefly describe at random a few of the virtues or good deeds and vices or sins.

The following are some of the Virtues.  
notable virtues and merits :—

'Asha,' generally translated 'holiness,' is a very much more comprehensive term in Zoroastrian ethics. It comprises every order, symmetry, all sorts of purity, truthfulness, and beneficence. Every Zoroastrian is taught from his or her infancy the holy aphorism, called 'Ashem Vohû,' which may be rendered thus :—

"Order or holiness is the best good. Hail, hail is to him, viz., who is the best holy one by way of holiness."

Honesty (Arsh-manangh) in dealing with others. "In all (dealings) debts must be paid with true thought, true word, and true deed to the man to whom the same are due."†

'Sraosha' comprises and denotes listening humility, meekness, docility, obedience to rightful authority, attention and submission to all true and beneficent

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\* Frastuyê.      † Yasna XIX, 17.

precepts, and the like. A Zoroastrian in his daily prayer called 'kemnâ-mazdâ' always prays that he may be blessed with this noble attribute of the good.

Compassion, Mercy (marzhdika), is spoken of as an attribute and ornament of the strong, "the mightiest in the mightiest, becoming the throned monarch better than his crown, an attribute to God Himself." "Desirable kingdom.....and Mercy, the protector of the helpless."\* But to have mercy upon the wicked is to partake of and encourage his wickedness, and therefore Zoroastrianism never recommends the extension of mercy to the wicked, "Verily he is wicked who encourages and advocates the wicked"†

Peace (âkhshlish) is spoken of as a co-operator of good mind, and is earnestly enjoined. "The Good Mind (and) Peace, that keeps connection."‡ "May in this house peace prevail over and conquer Discord."§

Thankfulness in prosperity and resignation in adversity. "I am thankful for the good ; I am patient and forbearing in times of opposition and misfortune." §

Sincere repentance for sin, coupled with a firm determination not again to commit the same misdeed. Repentance for sins and refraining from repetition is

\* Sîrôzahs.

† Sîrôzahs.

§ Patet-e-Pashemânî.

† Yasna XLVI, 6.

|| Yasna LX, 5.

instrumental in securing remission of punishment. (Vendidâd III. 40-42.)

Love and respect for parents, relations, elders, neighbours, and countrymen—and regard for inferiors and menials. In the Patet-e-Adarbâd every Zoroastrian expresses repentance for the violation of this duty in the following terms:—

“The sins against father, mother, sister, brother, wife, child, against superiors, against my own relations, against those living with me, against those who possess equal property, against neighbours, against inhabitants of the same town, against servants, every unrighteousness through which I have ranked myself amongst sinners ; of these sins repent I with thoughts, words, and works.” “Distress not, O Zarathushtra, thy father Pourushaspa or thy mother Dogdo.” (Sad-dar, ch. 42, quotation from the Avesta “Hádókht-Nask”). “He shall never see ‘behesht’ (paradise) with whom his parents are not pleased.” (Sitâyesh-e-Banâme Hormazd.)

Loyalty to the reigning sovereign is considered as the bounden duty of every subject. “Let good kings reign.”\* Every priest prays for the ruling sovereign in the Afrigân ceremony thus : “I bless the royal ruler of Ahura Mazda”† Moreover he implores long rule

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\*Yasna XLVIII, 5.

† Afrigân I, 14.

for the kingdom, long life for the king, and health and strength for his body.

To care for and rear 'gôspand,' *i. e.* innocent and useful domestic animals such as cows, goats, sheep, dogs, and to detest and destroy 'khrafsatras,' *i. e.* noxious reptiles such as serpents, scorpions, rats, wolves, tigers. This tenderness and regard for animals useful to man and injunction to destroy noxious animals, is another instance of the practical and matter-of-fact character of Zoroaster's teaching as opposed to the sickly sentimentalism which seeks to cherish and maintain all animal life, however injurious to men.

Truthfulness (Arshukhdhó Vâkhsh). "Truly uttered speech is the most victorious in assembly" (Sarosh Yasht Hádôkht, 3).—True evidence (ereshvachâ o) and true justice (râst dâvarî) are represented as pleasing to God and are accordingly rewarded by Him. (Gâthâ I, Hâ IV, 12). Hence justice and impartiality are enjoined. "Fight your cause justly even with your enemies." (Pemânî Pahlavi). So great is the estimation on which justice is held by this religion that a righteous and just judge is compared to Ahura Mazda and to the Amshâspands, whilst an unjust judge is like Ahariman and the demons. (Mainyo-i Khard, XXXIX., 45, 46).

Industry and diligence (thwakhshanghâ) in all good



works is enjoined, so also early rising. "Arise, O men !..... Lo ! here is 'búshyānsta' which whispers delay, coming upon you, who lulls to sleep again the whole living world as soon as it has awoken. Long sleep, O man, does not behove thee."<sup>2</sup> Inasmuch as an idle hand generally finds some mischief to do, every Zoroastrian is commanded to betake himself to some sort of lawful work (khveshkâri). The duties, enjoined by the Mazdayasni religion, include the proper performance of one's own vocation. "Which are the avocations ? They are that of the priest, of the warrior, of the husbandman, and artisans." (Yasna XIX, 17). Of all the lawful vocations three are considered as the most honourable. They are those of the priest, warrior and husbandman ; and this can scarcely be wondered at, seeing that to every settled community these are the most indispensable ones. The priest is the spiritual guide and moral preceptor, and his duties are to conserve the religion, to inculcate the worship of God, to enforce the decrees, traditions, and practices of the good Law, and to promote the instruction of the people in the matter of virtue and vice. The warrior class affords a safeguard against outside hostile invasions and peace and security against the criminal classes within.

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\* Vendidad XVIII, 16.

Their business is to repulse and chastise the foreign enemies of the country and to keep the people within in peace and safety. But with the king especially attaches a very great responsibility and the practice of the following virtues and duties are enjoyed upon him :

1. Good religion, 2. good wisdom, 3. good natural disposition (hâ-ahûih), 4. self-help (khvâparih),
- (?) 5. submission to the commandments of God, (Sraosha ?) 6. fulfilling the promise, Mithra, 7. constant good thought, 8. cheerful nature, 9. constantly remembering that 'sovereignty passes away,' 10. patronage of arts, 11. indignation towards the sinners, 12. communion of good will towards the people, 13. just orders, 14. sitting fearlessly at the court for the dispensation of justice to everybody, 15. liberality, 16. repression of avarice, 17. delivering his subjects from fear, 18. bestowing favours on the good, 19. fairness in the observation of conduct of his subordinates, 20. the service of God. (Dinkard, III. 133.)

It is also his duty to be prompt to safeguard his subjects from impending danger ; to extend agriculture and industry by freely supplying cattle and implements ; to befriend defenceless women and children and old men ; and to erect and maintain hospitals and distribute means of relief from sickness and disease. (Dinkard, I, 46.)

The husbandman is indispensable as the tiller of the ground, and thereby being the means of supplying food for mankind. His chief duty is to promote agriculture. The profession of agriculture occupies a very high and honourable place among the pursuits enjoined to be followed by Zoroastrians. It is the duty of every Zoroastrian to help in the promotion of agriculture. Agriculture is praised as the chief weapon with which to fight the demons of hunger and thirst, sickness and sorrow, theft and rapine. "He who would till the earth, O Spitama Zarathushtra ! with the left arm and the right, with the right arm and the left, unto him thus says the earth : ' O thou man ! who dost till me with the left arm and the right, with the right arm and the left,.....here shall I ever go on bearing, bringing forth all manner of food, bringing forth profusion of corn. '\* " Whoso cultivates barley cultivates righteousness."†

Chastity forms a fundamental virtue in the code of the Zoroastrian faith. (Vendidad XVIII. Ashi Yasht, etc.)

Self-help and self-reliance are virtues which are highly extolled. "Independent through one's own strength and ability."‡

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\* Vendidad III, 26-29. † Vendidad III, 31. ‡ Yasna IX, 25.

Liberality, charity (ráiti) and kindness to man and the useful animals are enjoined. Charity is one of the fundamental precepts of Zoroastrianism. The Gáthás and the Avesta abound with its praises. "May in this house Charity triumph over Miserliness." (Yasna LX., 5). But the charity must be judicious and discriminating. Accordingly it has been laid down that while charity towards deserving objects is meritorious, it is reprehensible to extend it to those who are unworthy of it. This affords another illustration of the beneficent and practical character of Zoroaster's teaching. And it is also notable that charity of a permanent character and directed to the general weal of the community such as schools and hospitals and water-works, is favoured more highly than objects of private charity of casual and temporary utility.

Promotion of education is enjoined. "Let him who wants knowledge be taught the holy word." \* "Which is the highest of all deeds of men? It is to give knowledge to those who are fit to receive knowledge and to give birth to every kind of holiness."† "For one, who from the little knowledge which he has, gives to those who are fit for it, is more acceptable than he who, though he knows, yet does not profit or help

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\* Vendidad IV, 44.

† Dinkard, III.

deserving persons.”\*

The use of one's powers to foster and protect the good and to minimise and destroy the evil is a moral principle held in high esteem in Zoroastrianism. “Power, full of strength, by the increase of which we may be enabled to overcome evil.”† Similarly resistance to and reduction and destruction of evil in the moral and the material world are scrupulously enjoined. “That we may combat and withstand against the torments of the tormenter.”‡

“Good bonafide deeds rank superior to mere verbal holy recitals,” is one of the chief moral principles of Zoroastrianism and is an important lesson recognized in advanced and rational ethics. “He who sows corn, enables himself to sow holiness ; he makes the law of Mazda grow higher and higher ; he renders the law of Mazda as effective as cannot be done with a hundred acts of verbal adoration, a thousand ceremonial oblations, ten thousand sacrifices.”|| “And whosoever, O Zarathushtra, shall perform the act of killing the devilish animal called ‘Zairimyangura’.....shall have his act to equal in merit to a repentance of sins.”§

\* Shikand-Gûmânîk-Vijâr, I., 46.

† Gâthâ I, Hâ I, 7.

† Gâthâ I, Hâ IV., 4.

|| Vendidad III, 31.

§ Vendidad XIII, 7.

Performance of good works both of public and private beneficence, and offering help to the helpless such as the blind, the lame, the indigent, etc. are peremptorily ordered. "Bethou most beneficent, following the practice of Mazda."\* "Be most beneficent as is the Lord Ahura Mazda to his creations."† "Be ready with your feet, hands, and understanding (lucid mind), O Mazdayasnian Zarathushtrians, for the prompt discharge of good, fitting and timely works, for the avoidance of inappropriate and untimely wicked works. Be alert to accomplish here in this world good deeds, and to afford help to the helpless and needy."‡

Hospitality, especially towards the worthy good and the deserving pious, is enjoined; and to fail to serve a holy person hospitably is regarded as a sin. "Far from this dwelling.....shall the bad pernicious hindrances be driven away where.....receives nourishment..... the holy man, who thinks much good, speaks much good, and does much good."§ "If I have neglected to grant hospitality to a stranger who came into the town.....I hereby repent with thoughts, words, and works."§

\* Afrin-e-Zartêsh, 2.

† Visparad, XV., 1.

.. † Afrine-e-Buzurgân.

|| Yasna, LVII., 14.

§ Patet Irâni.

“Cleanliness is next to godliness” is a noble commandment for which, as for other equally important sanitary truths, the civilized world is not the less indebted to the religion of Zoroaster, who says in his Gâthâs: “Purity is best for man from the moment of birth.”\* In fact cleanliness and bodily purity (yaozhdâthra) (pâkî-e-tan) form one of the chief commands of the Zoroastrian religion. Frequent and peremptory are the injunctions in favour of maintaining through and scrupulous cleanliness—a lesson in sanitation and hygiene, the great importance of which is now-a-days universally recognized by scientists all over the world. All bodily secretions are defiling and to be kept apart at a distance as containing the germs of disease.

The following are some of the notable vices  
 Vices. and sins emphatically denounced :—

‘Druj’ is a very comprehensive term for various kinds of vices, sins, and transgressions, violation of order and laws of physical and moral world; as opposed to ‘Asha.’ “That we may vanquish Druj.”† “May in this house Asha subordinate Druj.”‡

\* Gâthâ III. Hâ. II., 5.

† Gâthâ I., Hâ. IV., 4.

‡ Yasna LX., 5.

Dishonesty, avarice, arrogance, disobedience, stiff-neckedness. These are various kinds of Drujs.

Cruelty and hard-heartedness. "And who shall give us quiet from the cruel (men) of evil life and faith?"\* "The most oppressive of the oppressors shall be smitten."† "Let the tyrant be humbled."‡

Malice and revenge. "Whoso is a malicious and revengeful man.....make him broken-minded."||

Discord (anákhshtish). "The most discordant of discords shall be smitten, the most discordant of discords shall be afflicted."§

Lying and falsehood. "The most lying words of falsehood shall be smitten, the most lying words of falsehood shall be afflicted."¶ "Down is.....the false-speaking lie."\*\*\*

Abusive language. ".....those who use abusive language shall go to the house of Druj (hell)."††

False evidence and false justice are certainly punished, if not in this world, in the life to come. Hence injustice, partiality, and such other corruptions are reprobated. "And let not them also spoil (holy words)

\* Gáthâ III., Hâ II., 11.

† Ardibehesht Yasht, 14.

‡ Gáthâ III., Hâ II., 7.

|| Yasna IX, 28.

§ Ardibehesht Yasht, 15,

¶ Ardibehesht Yasht, 16.

\*\* Vendidad XIX., 46.

†† Gáthâ III., Hâ III., 11.



who prefer bribes to righteousness." "The bribe-taker will at last go to the house of the Most Wicked Mind (hell)."\*

Perjury, breach of promise, cheating, and such other crimes are considered most heinous and calling for severe punishment. These crimes are generally called 'Meherdaruji.' "Break not the contract, O Spitama! not the one that thou hadst entered into with one of the unfaithful, any more the one that thou hadst entered into with one of the faithful who is of thy own faith. For promise is a promise, none the less for the faithful than the unfaithful even."†

Indolence and slothfulness (búshyānsta) are hated as the evil qualities of the daēvas. "I drive away procrastination which inculcates delay."‡

Beggary is denounced and this is another characteristic feature of Zoroastrianism. "He who does not till the earth, O Spitama, with the left arm and the right, with the right arm and the left, unto him thus warns the earth: 'O thou man! who dost not till me with the left arm and the right, with the right arm and the left, ever shalt thou be forced to stand at the door of the stranger, among them begging for bread; ever

\*Gāthā I., Hā V., 12-14

†Mihir yasht, 2.

‡ Vendidad XI., 9.

shalt thou crave there for the crumb refuse which is unto thee brought by those who can spare it out of their profusion of wealth.”\*

Theft (tâyu), robbery (hazô), personal assault (âgerepta etc.) and murder (tanu-peretha) are all strongly reprobated. “Let us send that petition forth for the encounter with and for the dislodgement of thieves and robbers.”† “He who is a thief.....let torments come to him.”‡ “Steal not others’ property.”§

Prostitution, adultery (jahi), unnatural crime, are regarded as heinous and worthy of the most rigid denunciation. An adulterous person is considered as the greatest enemy of Ahura Mazda. “Who grieves Thee with the sorest grief? Who pains Thee with the sorest pain? Ahura Mazda answered: ‘It is the jahi, O Spitama Zarathushtra! who goes a-whoring after the faithful and the unfaithful, after the worshippers of Mazda and the worshippers of the daêvâs, after the wicked and the righteous.”§ His crime is considered as serious as that of destroying the good creations of the world. That person is anathematized in several places in the Avesta.

\* Vendidad III., 27-29.

† Yasna LXV. 8.

‡ Yasna LXI, 2-3.

§ Pemâni Pahlavi.

§ Vendidad XVIII., 61-62.

Omission to discharge one's debt honestly is a sin. "He who does not pay the wages of him to whom they are due.....what is the atonement thereof?"\* "He who does not restore a thing lent, when it is asked for back again, does nothing less than stealing the thing; he actually robs the man."†

Extravagance is reproved and thriftiness enjoined. "Those who through evil management and understanding.....deprive themselves the opportunity of collecting riches, though capable of amassing riches, are as if it were the followers of the daêvas. But he, O Mazda, who with good mindedness preserves opulence and fatness, is truly wise."‡ "Ahura Mazda indeed does not allow us to waste anything of value that we may have... ..not even so little as a maid lets fall at one move in spinning thread."§

Inebriation is strongly reprobated. "Verily all kinds of inebriation are followed by violence."§

The golden mean, the proper measure (Patmân), is enjoined in all matters.

Miserliness (arâiti) is disapproved. "He who, though quite able, does not readily give in charity, shall go

\* Gâthâ II, Hâ II. 19.

‡ Gâthâ III., Hâ III., 4-5.

† Vendidad IV, 1.

§ Vendidad V., 60.

to the house of Druj (hell").\* "The miser lets the world to go to destruction without attempting to avert it."† "He who is without charitable feelings in him,.....let torments freely come to him."‡

Abetment of crime is reproved and is in many cases regarded as equivalent to its commission. ||

Pride, haughtiness, covetousness, slander, anger, and envy—these vices are condemned. "Pride shall be smitten, pride shall be afflicted; scorn shall be smitten, scorn shall be afflicted; the greatest slanderer of slanders shall be smitten, the greatest slanderer of slanders shall be afflicted." "Oh slanderers, get ye away!"§ "Slander not."¶ "I withstand the demon of anger."\*\* "Envy is of the law of the Daôvas."||

Just as certain virtues are said to be the peculiar attributes of the four classes of the people and highly becoming to them, so certain vices are specially to be shunned by them. For the priestly class hypocrisy, covetousness, negligence, slothfulness, attention to trifles and unbelief in religion, are peculiarly unbecoming. The warrior must be above oppression,

\* Gâthâ II., Hâ IV., 5.

§ Ardibehesht Yasht 8, 15.

† Farvardin Yasht, 137.

¶ Pemanî Pahlavî.

‡ Yasna LXV., 8.

\*\* Vendidad XI., 9.

|| E. G. Vendidad XV., 12.

†† Yasna IX., 5

violence, breach of promise, encouragement of evil, ostentation, arrogance and insolence. The husbandman must fly from ignorance, envy, ill-will and malice ; and the artisans must avoid incredulity, ingratitude, rudeness and slander.\*

As a specimen of serious and practical ethics we subjoin the earnest admonition addressed by the priest to the marrying pair at their wedding.

“Learn purity. Be worthy of good praise. Let the mind think good thoughts, let your words and works be good. Let all wicked thoughts be set aside, all wicked words be diminished, all wicked works be burnt up. Praise purity and set aside sorcery. Be the worshipper of Mazda, accomplish works according to the full mind. Win for thyself property by right-dealing. Speak truth with the rulers and be obedient. Be modest with friends, clever, and well-wishing. Slander not. Be not cruel. Be not wrathful-minded. Commit no further sin to cover the shame of one already committed. Be not covetous. Torment not. Cherish not wicked envy, be not haughty, treat no one with scorn, cherish no lust. Rob not the property of others. Keep thyself aloof from contact with the wives of others. Do good

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\* Mainyo-i-Khart, LIX.

works with great alacrity.....Enter into no strife with a revengeful man. Be no companion to a covetous one. Go not the way of the slanderers. Enter into no concord with one of ill-fame. Associate not in work with the unskilful. In combating with thy adversaries even observe justice. Go with friends who can make themselves agreeable to friends. Enter into no strife with those of evil repute. Before an assembly take care to speak only weighty words. Before kings speak with due decorum and modesty. Ennoble the name of thy ancestors. In no wise displease thy mother. Preserve thine own body pure according to law.”

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It does not appear from the Avesta that the Parsi Sacerdotal order. priesthood was a hereditary profession. But at present it is practically so, and this has probably come down from very old times. For Herodotus says that among the ancient Medes the Magi, *i. e.*, the priests, formed a separate tribe by themselves. At present every son of a priest is called an ‘ostô’ and every daughter an ‘ostî’ by birthright. This word is derived from Avesta ‘Hâvishta,’ literally ‘one who is to prepare the sacred drink,’ or ‘a disciple in priesthood.’ In former times women were apparently eligible for the exercise of the

priestly calling, though now-a-days no female is allowed to be initiated into it. As soon as the son of a priest has gone through the course of committing to memory all the Avesta except the Vendidad, and is not affected by any bodily ailment or defect or deformity incapacitating him from taking part in the performance of holy ceremonies, he is initiated into the craft. The ceremony of initiation is called the 'Nâvar.' It lasts for a month. After this initiation he is called an 'Ervad' (Av. 'Aethrapaiti,' *i. e.*, the master of art in teaching and sacrifices) or a 'priest.' As he advances in years and increases his knowledge and experience of sacred lore and comes to be distinguished for wisdom, he is then entitled to be designated a 'Mobed,' which, if traced up to the Avesta, would be read 'magôpaiti' the same as 'Aethrapaiti.' The Greek name 'magus' (plu. 'magi') for the Iranian priests may be recognized in this latter title.—When an Ervad has completed his study of the Avesta and of the recitation and practice of the ritual, he goes through the ceremony of 'Marâteb' which is the final degree the craft can aspire to attain. The etymology of this word is uncertain.—The dignity of a high priest or 'Dastur' is the highest in the craft. This word can be traced through Pahlavi 'Dastobar' to the Avesta 'Dâhishta' a superlative of 'Dâ' which

means a wise man, a philosopher, a doctor of divinity. The recipient has not remaining any further ceremony to perform, but the dignity is conferred upon him by the united voice of the whole congregation, *honoris causa* in testimony of pre-eminent attainments and high character. How it was conferred in ancient times, we have no means of knowing. But in later times the honour came to be generally conferred upon the son, or brother, or any other near relation, of a deceased Dastur on the third day after his demise. The whole congregation assembled at the late Dastur's 'Oothamna,' or third day's ceremony, makes the appointment of his successor authoritative by investing him with a shawl, the insignia of the office of a Dastur. The Dastur as becomes his rank is naturally treated with higher respect and honour than the holders of the subordinate ranks of the profession and enjoys certain special privileges and precedence in reference to the performance of certain ceremonies.

It seems that in the time of the Avesta, later than that of the Gāthās of Zoroaster, a sacerdotal dignity was instituted and recognized as higher than even royalty itself. The person invested with this distinction was called 'Zarathushtrôtémô,' i. e. one who most resembled or came nearest to Zoroaster. Such a dignity does not exist at present, and probably it was this



designation, which bears such a close resemblance to the name Zarathushtra or Zoroaster, and implies more than one Zarathushtra, that gave rise to the notion among the ancient Greeks of there having existed more personages than one of the name of the illustrious Prophet and claiming that exalted rank.

Zoroastrian worship consists either of simple oral recitations of portions of the Sacred Word or such recitations combined and accompanied with the performance of ceremonial ritual. These recitals are compositions in the sacred language of the Avesta, original or oftener extracted from previous compositions or of a combination of the Avesta and Pazend languages. Thanks to the English, Gujarati, French, and German translations, any one interested and inquisitive in the matter may easily acquire swift knowledge of the subject, without necessity of acquiring a knowledge of the original languages in which the compositions exist, which in its turn is now-a-days very rare. Generally every one prays individually by himself, but on several important occasions public worship by the whole congregation is also performed. Of the ancient sacred recitals the most necessary to every Zoroastrian for daily use are those comprised in the "Nirang-i-kusti", *i. e.* the prayer on untying and retying the sacred

thread 'kusti' round the waist, on the sacred shirt, 'Sadrâ.' Every Zoroastrian learns this by heart as he has to recite it several times in the day. The rest may be orally recited or read out from the Sacred prayer books. The recitals combined with ceremonial ritual are universally done only by the priests, since most of the ritual must be performed by priests.\*

Some of the ritual can be performed and the necessary accessories handled by the  
 Ritual. priests alone ;† others there are in

which laymen may touch the sacred implements, but they cannot take part in the performance. There are some very few other minor ceremonies which both priests and laymen can equally perform.

It seems that the practice of offering animal sacrifice must have prevailed at some time or other in ancient Persia. The practice however has long since ceased to exist. Offerings of various kinds of food and drink, and of flowers, water, and incense, used by the ancient Iranians, still survive among the Parsis, those principally used in modern times being the juice of Haoma plant, milk, sacred bread, ghee (clarified butter), holy water, and dry fragrant wood such as

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\* See Appendix H.

† See Appendix J.

sandal wood, frankincense, etc. which is used for the flame of the fire.

There is no clear or satisfactory evidence of the practice being in vogue of erecting edifices, fire-temples, in the time of the Avestâ, though it is certain that the house-fire was considered sacred and was carefully tended and kept burning alive with dry fuel, and other fragrant substances. In later times, however, fire-temples seem to have obtained a recognized and strong footing. They are of three grades : (1) the Atash-ê-Dâdgâh, (2) the Atash-ê-Adarân, and (3) the Atash-ê-Behrâm.\*

This outward and visible regard for fire as a beneficent and indispensable creation of Ahura Mazda and as a potent and salutary natural agent, must have given rise to the misnomer of the Zoroastrians being called fire-worshippers. But it is a gross misconception generated through the ignorance and disregard of the essential and underlying principle that none of the elements, though esteemed as objects of great usefulness, was ever regarded by them as in themselves Deities independent of Ahura Mazda, the Supreme God, who alone has again and

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\* See Appendix K.

again received the highest veneration as being the sole object of worship and adoration. The main influence which fire, as the earthly source of light and heat, exercises on the economy of the universe, is sufficient to vindicate the high regard and esteem in which it was held by the ancient Iranians ; and though this outward veneration for this mighty physical agent may have lent colour and strength to the charge which the ignorance or bigotry of their opponents were not slow to invent, it is an undoubted fact that the charge has invariably been repudiated and denounced by Zoroastrians themselves, and that thoughtful and fairminded writers of antiquity no less than the learned scholars of modern times have absolved them from the oft repeated charge, having formed a correct conception of the fanciful grounds on which it was based. Throughout all the sacred writings, as we have seen, the most solemn and emphatic injunction has been laid to worship Ahura Mazda the Supreme God and Him alone, and in all times Zoroastrians have in their writings been called ' Mazdayasna,' *i. e.* the worshippers of God Mazda. So that though the ancient Iranians esteemed fire as the symbol of divinity and as such worthy of respect and reverence, they never professed themselves to be the worshippers of fire. Zoroaster in his own Gâthâs speaks of fire as a bright and powerful creation

of Ahura Mazda and prefers it as a symbol of divinity to idols and other created objects. But nowhere does he enjoin the worship of fire. On the contrary he most emphatically enjoins the worship of Ahura Mazda alone. He says: "Let to Thy fire be offered the salutation of holiness, and not as far as I am able, to that worshipped by Mânya."\* Herodotus, while he refers to this reverence of the Iranians for the fire, nowhere affirms that they were fire-worshippers. Ferdosi too bears emphatic testimony on the point and warmly repels the charge of fire-worship often hurled against the Zoroastrians. Says he in the *Shâhnâmeh*, the immortal epic which has evoked the highest admiration of all ages :

" Na gûi ke âtash-parastâ bûdand,  
Parastanda e pâk yazdâ bûdand."

"Do not say that they were fire-worshippers; for they were worshippers of God the Holy."

It is enjoined that a Zoroastrian child between the age of seven and fifteen must be  
The Navzôt invested with *Sadrâ* and *Kusti*  
ceremony. which are the visible insignia,  
symbols or emblems, of the Mâzdayasni religion. The *Sadrâ* is a shirt of white linen with a peculiarly shaped

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\* Gâthâ II., IIâ I., 9.

breast-piece called "Garêbân" attached to the collar on the front-side. It must be of white colour, white as indicative of cleanliness and purity serves as the badge of the Mâzdayasni religion.\* Kusti is a peculiar kind of woven band or tape composed of seventy-two woollen threads. It is girded three times round the waist with four knots, two in the front and two behind. It is to be laid on the body by day and by night. The three rounds of the kusti serve to remind the wearer of the three cardinal virtues of the Zoroastrian religion, *viz.*, Humata, good thought, Hâkhta, good word, and Huvarshta, good deed. The four knots are intended to remind the wearer of his own four distinctive epithets, *viz.* 'Mazdayasnô,' the worshipper of Mazda the Only One Most Wise God ; 'Zarathushtrish,' the follower of Zoroaster ; 'Vîdâêvô,' an opponent of the Dêvas ; and 'Ahuratkaêshô,' observer of the law of Ahura. The kusti must be made of lamb's wool as being symbolical of the meekness and innocence of the animal and reminding the wearer to lead a life of purity and righteousness.

The ceremony of the investiture of sadrâ and kusti is called "Navzôt," *i. e.* new or first worship, and

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\* Mihir yasht, 126.

it is performed by one priest in the presence of other priests and laymen. The candidate who has learnt a few fundamental principles of religion, having purified himself or herself with ceremonial ablution is presented to the priest, who makes him or her recite three times the Pâzend confession of faith in the presence of those assembled. The following is the confession :—

“ Praise be to the good Mâzdayasni religion and to the pure most right Wisdom created by Ahura Mazda. The good righteous right religion which the Lord has sent to his creatures is that which Zoroaster has brought. The religion is the religion of Zoroaster, the religion of Ahura Mazda given to Zoroaster.”

The candidate having held the sleeves of the white robe of the priest, the latter winds the kusti round his or her waist with four knots, both reciting the ‘nirang-e-kusti,’ including the confession of faith in the Avesta language, and with their faces towards the sun. The candidate is from that time duly admitted into Zoroastrian religion. The ceremony is concluded by the priest pronouncing a few benedictions on the initiate all the while showering slowly dry pieces of cocoanut, almond, raisins, grains of pomegranate, etc. over him or her. After this the assembly disperses.

The Zoroastrian religion, containing the doctrine of supporting Spentomains, or marriage, the principle of increase, and of opposing Angromains, or the principle of decrease, inculcates marriage as a sacred duty. Zoroaster in his Gâthâs forcibly enjoins on his own daughter Pouruchisti and all the rest of his followers never to remain unmarried without valid reasons. The Vendidad advocates the giving of a sister or a daughter in marriage to a good husband as a meritorious deed. In the same work a married man is held in consideration to an unmarried one and celibacy is discountenanced and reprobated. Zoroastrians, as a race, have been in all ages strict monogamists.

Marriage outside one's own family is not disallowed, but marriage within the family itself is much approved. Such a marriage is called 'khvetvadatha' literally 'marriage among relations.' This unfortunate nomenclature has at oft times given colour and instance to the unfounded charge that 'next-of-kin marriages' that is marriages between the nearest relations were not only allowed but regarded as meritorious among the ancient Iranians. But there is the very best authority for disproving this vile charge to the contrary effect that such incestuous marriages were never legally allowed among the Zoroastrians.



Herodotus says, king Cambyzes had a mind to marry one of his sisters and being conscious that it was not permissible by law, he was necessitated to inquire of the court judges whether it could be under his circumstances allowable by the customs and usages, if not by the religion of former Iranians, or not. The judges strict to their conscience and true to their office are said to have decided that it was not allowable in their religion nor sanctified by ancient customs. If incestuous marriages had been permissible under exceptions, so great a king like Cambyzes had no need of stooping to solicit the opinion of judges.

Marriages among ancient Iranians always took place after the couple had reached full age of puberty. The same custom is still prevalent among the surviving present Zoroastrians of Persia. But the ancestors of the domiciled Indian Parsis, after their taking refuge in India gradually imitated the custom of child marriage so widely prevalent among their neighbours, the Hindus, with whom they associated ; but this pernicious custom has happily now all but disappeared at least in Bombay.

Excepting some innocent and other harmful ceremonies, songs, etc., copied from the Hindus, the actual solemn ceremony sanctifying marriage is performed by a head priest, assisted by another. It

is conducted in the later Pâzend language. In the course of the benediction the declaration of the bride and bridegroom is taken three times as to the choice made of each other to the marriage. As also the consent of heir sponsors and witnesses is taken three times. After this blessings are pronounced and certain sound admonitions given to the couple. All this while a few grains of rice are kept continually showered on the couple by the priests as a natural emblem of the plenty and happiness which are to bless their married life. A Sanskrit translation of the Pâzend original is also recited, which innovation is said to have been introduced in grateful deference to the desire of the Raja of Sanjân, a town near Surat, who was the first to give protection to the Parsis on their very landing on the western shores of India. It was customary among the Indian Parsis, to perform the marriage ceremony twice, once in the evening at lamp-light and again after midnight, but now in more modern times the practice is becoming common to have the evening ceremony alone performed and considered quite sufficient to make the contract binding.

It being a fundamental principle of the Zoroastrian religion to maintain fire, earth, air and water pure and undefiled, the Parsis neither burn nor bury their dead,

Zoroastrian Funeral.

nor consign them to water. Their mode of disposing of the dead is to expose them open to the desiccating heat of the sun on the tops of high hills or on raised stony platforms there to be devoured by carnivorous birds—an eminently sanitary mode of annihilating and destroying sources of contagion in the interest of the surrounding living beings. The decomposing dead bodies, being the fruitful source of spreading contagion and infection, cannot be allowed to be touched except by the professional corpse-bearers, a distinct class specially maintained for the purpose of removing dead bodies from their houses to the Towers of Silence. The dead bodies are covered with, as well as the corpse-bearers are dressed in, clean white cast away clothes which must be sufficiently old and worn out to be entirely unserviceable for further use in order that no waste of usable material might occur. The corpse while in the house is placed on the ground in a corner on large slabs of stone or impermeable hard dry clods of earth, and is carried on an impermeable metallic iron-bier. Before removing the corpse from the house, two priests standing side by side, holding a band of cloth between their hands as a sign of co-operation and with their faces directed towards the corpse, recite the funeral service called ‘Gâhân-sarâyashni,’ which is a selection

of the seven chapters of the first Gâthâ of Zoroaster. These holy words being the most sublime composition of the Prophet himself are recited on that occasion. Having borne the corpse to the Tower of Silence on the shoulders of four corpse-bearers and the mourners having had a last look at the dead at a distance of some feet from the Tower, it is carried into the Tower by the Nasâ-sâlârs, the chief corpse-bearers, *i.e.*, the persons who are specially charged with the service of conveying the corpse into the Tower itself. There each body—man, woman, and child—is placed in separate carved out stone receptacles of the required dimensions called ‘Pâvi.’ In the earliest times corpses were exposed on summits of high mountains without any inclosure, and when the bones were denuded of flesh by dogs, vultures and other carnivorous birds, and rendered quite dry, and desiccated in the course of one year, they were removed and preserved in ‘Astôdâns,’ *i.e.* receptacles for the preservation of bones, the stone urns referred to by classical authors. The Astôdâns were made of stone, mortar, or any other durable substance capable of withstanding infection, according to the means of the relatives of the dead. The present Towers of Silence are so constructed as to secure combinedly both these provisions of readily disposing of the flesh on the one

hand and of preserving the bones on the other. The modern is superior to the ancient method in (1) that it does not defile a considerable area of ground and spread contagion far and wide, and (2) it recognises no distinction between the rich and the poor, all bones being disposed of in the same well, and an equality in death is being thus established.\*

Among the Zoroastrians, contact with every kind of impure matter is to be avoided  
 Purificatory laws. as shunning the cause of defilement. In order to purify the contaminated body of the injurious effect of defilement, various kinds of ablutions, sometimes accompanied by the performance of certain ritual, and segregation for shorter or longer periods have been prescribed.

The Vendidad (V. 45-56) enjoins that a woman giving birth to a still-born child must be kept isolated for a fort-night. During this period she has to submit herself to a strict regimen as regards food, washing, and clothing. Her diet is to be digestibly light, consisting of fresh milk, baked meat, fresh or dry fruits and the like. Her washing is to be regulated as her specific case may require at the end of three, six or nine days. The extreme period is at the

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\* See Appendix L.

expiration of a fortnight when she is to be considered clean notwithstanding her continued illness if any. Women during confinement, as this word itself signifies, segregated. Not before long generally they used to remain isolated for a period of full forty days. But better ideas now prevail and the period is shortened where it is desirable. According to the Vendidad (XVI.) every Zoroastrian woman during menstruation must also isolate herself. It will be observed that these are very salutary injunctions for the preservation of the health of the patient during her weak state and condition and the wisdom and propriety of observing them are recognized by Non-Zoroastrians with the light of modern medical science.

The religious year of the Zoroastrians professes or ought to be a tropical solar one. It is divided into twelve months of thirty days with five intercalary days added at the end of the twelfth month, thus making in all three hundred and sixty-five days in a year. This, however, is not the full tropical solar year, which consists of over three hundred and sixty-five days, some five hours, forty-eight minutes and forty-eight seconds. This annual fraction of a day, being left uncomputed since the end of the Persian Monarchy, has now amounted to ten months and eight days.

Ritual relating  
to fixed times.

Researches of modern scholars, especially of Mr. K. R. Cama, has clearly established that, in order to adjust all religious festivals at their proper places, it is necessary to reform the present religious calendar by making up all the intercalations that have been up to now for the past 1270 years neglected. He advocates an intercalary day at the end of every four years, the Jamshêdî Navrôz, *i.e.*, the Vernal Equinox, being treated by him as the commencement of the religious Year.

Believers in tradition are of opinion that in ancient times intercalation was performed of a full month at the end of every 120 years, but for practical purposes in modern world they prefer intercalation of one day every 4 years. There is still variance of opinion on the first month, Mr. Cama urging in favour of Dai, which is difficult to be swallowed by those accustomed to take Farvardin as being the first in practice for the past several centuries.

Every day of twenty-four hours is divided into five unequal parts, called 'Gâhs,' for certain prayers and ceremonials. They are called Gâhs, because they depend on the motion of the sun. Every day of the month bears the name of a certain invisible heavenly being, peculiar to itself, *e. g.*, the first day is called Ahurmazd, the second Bahman, and so on. The same is the case with the names of the twelve months.

The first, the eighth, the fifteenth, and the twenty-third days are sacred to Ahura Mazda. They are as if it were the Sabbath-days of the Zoroastrians. When the name of a day is identical with that of a month, that day is fixed for a 'jashan' or festival, *e. g.* the nineteenth day of the month Farvardin being named 'Farvardin,' the nineteenth of that month is called 'Jashan-ô-Farvardiân.' Similarly the third day of the month Ardibehesht is called 'Ardibehesht jashan,' and so on. They are altogether twelve in number of the similar character.

There are six season festivals, called 'Gahambârs,' each lasting for five days and occurring at unequal intervals dependent on the variations of the seasons.

The last ten days of the year constitute the Farvardigân Feast called Muktât in Gujrati by modern Parsis. They are dedicated to the commemoration of the Fravashis of the holy beings of the past, present, and future times.

The New Year's day is a great festival in honour of the advent of spring and 'rapithvina,' the warm season of the year. A similar festival is observed on the third day 'Ardibehesht' to welcome the entry of the "rapithvina."

On the sixth day of the month Farvardin falls the Khordâdsâl Festival, traditionally the birth-day of



Zoroaster. The eleventh day of the month Daê is a solemn festival, traditionally the anniversary of Zoroaster's death.\*

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Such is a brief outline of the remanet—still magnificent in its ruins—of the ancient Conclusion. and venerable religion, which has survived the vicissitudes of time and the ravages of persecution, intolerance and fanaticism. The hoary antiquity of the religion of Zoroaster is now accepted as an acknowledged historical fact, and a discriminating critic has remarked in his work,† that Zoroastrianism existed at the earliest birth of Time; while its serene sublimity, its wise and practical beneficence, its peculiarly humane tendencies and its freedom from the fantasies and superstitions, which debase and enslave the human intellect, have elicited warm applause and cordial admiration at all periods of its existence. The Gâthâs—the earliest and authentic productions of the great Bactrian Sage—breathe a spirit of pure monotheism and a simple sublimity of ethical and philosophical conceptions unsurpassed by any other religions system of antiquity; and the all-pervading tone of all the later writings is an equally

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\* See Appendix M.

† Words on Existing Religions, by the Hon. S. G. Canning, 1892.

peremptory Commandment, 'Thou shalt serve the Lord, thy God, and only Him shalt serve,' and an injunction for unswerving adherence to truth, righteousness, and rectitude. Ahura Mazda and Asha—God and Truth—are the fundamental articles of their creed, Humta, Hâkhta, and Huvarshta—Good thoughts, Good words, and Good acts—the great and abiding pillars of the faith. The intense contemplation of the mighty and awe-inspiring phenomena of nature, and the deep reverence for the great and beneficent works of the Creator, which are like the visible and outward manifestations of His power and greatness, serve but as an uplifting from Nature to Nature's God. The great and all-absorbing problems of life, the hopes and yearnings for futurity and immortality—these are dealt with in a spirit pre-eminently humane and rational. Closely intertwined with the religious ordinances and the ethical and philosophical conceptions is a highly developed and organised system of law and social polity moulded and influenced by judicial, sanitary, and hygienic notions which are a striking reflex of the teachings of modern science ; and if, as some maintain, the true basis of morality is utility, *i. e.*, the promotion of the general happiness and welfare, then the religious system of Zoroaster is in the highest degree moral and utilitarian in the best and noblest sense of the term.

The name 'Good Religion,' which has been assigned to it, is peculiarly appropriate and felicitous. In its condemnation of renunciation of the world and asceticism, of self-mortification and fastings, of celibacy and religious mendicancy, of vicarious redemption and eternal punishment and torment, we have striking indications of the essentially practical and beneficent character of the religion ; while by its teaching us to make our lives sublime and the injunctions for scrupulous purity and cleanliness, it furnishes us with a simple but sublime guide and principle of conduct and of right and duty. No wonder that such a religion needed not fire and sword, or the bayonet and bullet for its dissemination and was content to appeal to the reason and conviction of its followers and that it has left a deep permanent and most salutary mark on the moral and intellectual advancement of the civilized world.

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# APPENDICES

## A

The history of the time-honoured religion of Zoroaster and its followers being The greatest prevalence of interesting, we give briefly a few Zoroastrianism. facts relating thereto. Leaving aside the prehistoric times and coming to the historical, it may be asserted that the kings of the Achæminian Dynasty such as Cyrus, Darius, Xerxes and others (B. C. 559-329) were Zoroastrians, for they emphatically speak of Auramazda, the greatest God ( Bagha Vazraka Auramazdâ ) as does every Zoroastrian. In his cuneiform inscriptions Darius says: "Auramazdâ helped me; by the grace of Auramazdâ I am King." The inscription of Alvend begins thus: "The Great God is Auramazdâ, who created this earth and that heaven, who created mankind, and made them for blessedness, who made Darius the king.....O men! The will of Auramazdâ is this—think of no evil, forsake not the right way!" Xerxes begins his inscriptions in the same manner "Auramazdâ is the great God, he who made the earth and heaven, and named Xerxes king." In his effigy carved on the rock of Naksh-i-

Rustam near Persipolis Darius is represented as praying to God while standing in the open before fire, sun, and moon, which are the symbols of Zoroastrian worship. From historical and other evidences it may safely be inferred that in the Achæminian times Zoroastrianism had spread over a large portion of the ancient world.

The conquest of Persia by Alexander the Macedonian (B. C. 329) first shook the religion of Zoroaster to its foundation. In the conflagration which is said to have been set fire by his order to the magnificent palace of Persipolis, the collection of most authentic library of this religion was burnt down. And since that time this venerable religion and its literature, through a variety of causes, have suffered many disasters. The later Persian authors who have written in the Pahlavi and Pâzend languages are unanimous on this point. Most of them apply the opprobrious epithet of 'Gajasteh' *i. e.* 'accursed' to Alexander. Valkhash (Vologeses), a Parthian king, is said to have made an attempt to collect ancient books, but it is believed that he succeeded partially only in putting together a few fragments.

Ardeshir Bâbekân, the founder of the Sassanian dynasty (A. C. 226) revived and restored this religion. During the

Its first decline.

Its Restoration.

period of Sassanian Monarchy (A. C. 226—651) “ the whole of the vast region from the Red Sea to the Indus, and from the Phasis to the Mediterranean, forms the empire of kings who inscribe on their coins ‘ Mazdayasni ’ as their highest title, placing on the obverse the fire-altar as the emblem of their creed.”\*

In the reign of Shapur II, Aderbâd Mârespand, the most pious and learned high priest of his time, accomplished the work of reorganizing and readjusting the prayers, ritual and the canonical books of the religion.

But the last heavy blow dealt to Zoroastrianism was by the Muhammedan conquest of Persia (A. C. 651). This disaster Its final fall. prostrated it so very completely that though centuries have rolled over, it has not been able to regain its lost position.

It seems that in the last days of the Sassanian Monarchy, and shortly after its down- Exodus of some of its followers into India. fall, small bands of Zoroastrians settled in India from time to time for commercial and other purposes. And when owing to the persecution of the fanatic hordes of the Arabs

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\* F. P. Cobbe's Studies, New and Old of Ethical and Social Subjects, pp. 103—104.

it became more and more difficult to cherish and preserve the old religion, handful of Zoroastrians made the last emigration to India and being wafted on its western shores, settled in the province of Gujerat under the protection of Hindu Rajas.

The Indian Parsis are the descendants of these emigrants. Their number according to the last census of 1900 is 89002. The present number of its followers.

The number of Zoroastrians in the mother country, Persia, was reduced in course of time through privation of living and conversion to Muhammedanism and such other causes. So much so that in 1892 it amounted to only 9269 individuals.

There are at present only two divisions among the Indian Parsis—the Shehenshâhîs and the Kadimîs. By far the larger number of Indian Parsis belong to

Two sects of its followers.

the former sect, while a handful of them and all those residing in Persia belong to the latter. The only points of difference between them are two: (1) the difference in the commencement of the year, which falls a month earlier among the Kadimîs than among the other sect, and (2) a few minor difference of ritual and pronunciations of certain words of the sacred recitations. These trivial differences are so disregarded as not to allow them to affect in the least the

social relations of inter-marriage, partnership of life and property, liberty of conscience, and harmony and good will between them.

It is just within the last two centuries only that the Resuscitation of the race and religion have enjoyed relief and security, and advancement in worldly prosperity in India under the benign British Rule.

It will be readily conceived that no race professing an ancient religion, however carefully and tenaciously it may strive to preserve its genuine doctrines, can avoid being affected and influenced, sometimes unconsciously, by the religious ideas and doctrines, by habits and imitations, manners and customs of other neighbouring races, with whom it is brought into daily social and domiciliary contact. Such was the case with the ancient Israelites, and the same, as appears from the literature of Zoroastrianism, was the case with the followers of this religion more than once. Some of the admixture which they thus received and the customs and manners they unintentionally adopted from their surroundings, will be seen in this essay and appendices. Suffice it to say for the present that though the ancient Zoroastrians migrated into India with the avowed puritanic object of escaping the contamination of their persecutors and of observing



the purity of their religion and religious code, yet as time wore on they found themselves incapable of resisting the inroads and imperceptibly succumbed to many of the notions, customs and superstitions of their neighbours, the Hindus, the Muhammedans and others. These outside excrescences, as might in the nature of things be expected, clung to them somewhat tenaciously for a long time, until a few of them were attempted to be got rid of only within the last fifty years or so, thanks principally to the strenuous exertions of the "*Ráhnnumái Mazdayasnán Sabhá*," an influential and representative religious association established in Bombay in A. C. 1851 by a small band of enlightened, enthusiastic and earnest reformers, the most renowned among them being the late Mr. Navroji Furdoonji, C.I.E., popularly known as "the Tribune of the people," and Mr. Dadabhai Navroji, M.P., his constant associate and right-hand man in every work of public interest. Mr. Navroji was its president from the time of its establishment till his death in 1885, save when absent from Bombay during his sojourn in England, and Mr. Dadabhai, at the sacrifice of his most valuable time, still continues to evince an active interest in the furtherance of its work, although permanently residing in England for several decades past. This assembly has brought about

many important religious reforms among the Parsis of the present time and is still prosecuting its laudable work. Besides its efforts in the direction of religious and social reforms, it is continually endeavouring to disseminate the general knowledge of Zoroastrian religion and morals by lectures and sermons, and since the last twenty-two years by religious instruction imparted through teachers to the youth of the community, according to the tenets of the Gâthâs of Zoroaster and such other later writings as harmonize with the spirit of the Gâthâs.

The study of Avesta and Pahlavî languages, as it was carried on forty years ago among the Parsis, was quite traditional, very loose and perfunctory, pursued as it was without any idea of grammar or philology. The translations were naturally very diffused, vague and very often faulty. In 1861 A.C., Mr. K. R. Cama, our esteemed Parsi citizen and the present chairman of the Rahnumai Sabhâ, having come in contact with European *savants* of high repute during his travels in Europe first himself studied these languages with Dr. Spiegel and others on the modern philological principles and on his return to Bombay introduced that study among his co-religionists ; and it is from that time that the real period of revival of

The revival of  
Avesta and Pahlavi  
Studies among the  
Parsis.

these studies among the Parsis may be said to have commenced. Before this time though there existed among the Parsi community the Mulla Firûz Madressa for religious studies, there was nothing like the systematic real philological teaching of Avesta and Pahlavi. Mr. Cama, to put the study on a proper footing, opened a private class at his own residence, where at considerable personal and pecuniary sacrifice, he personally taught these languages to a few young priests, the humble writer of this essay being his very first disciple. A little later on the Mulla Firûz Madressa was placed on a better basis of study, and another Madressa was soon after founded for the promotion of Avesta and Pahlavi studies in commemoration of the name of the renowned first Parsi Baronet, Sir Jamsetji Jijibhai. From these institutions there has now sprung up a number of young Parsis, both from among the Athornan class and laymen. Mr. Cama has been most earnest and indefatigable in the propagation and advancement of his favorite pursuit. The founding of the "Zarthôsti-Dînnî-Khol-Karnârî-Mandli" (Society for promoting researches into the Zoroastrian Religion) is another instance of the energy and earnestness of this accomplished scholar who has been all along its guiding spirit and its heart and soul, and his interest in the Râhnumai Sabha is equally remarkable.

## B

Brief Summaries      The following is a brief summary  
of all parts of the      of the matter contained in the  
Avesta.                      Gâthâs.

*Gatha Ahunavaiti*.—Chapter I. (Yasna XXVIII.) is called 'Ahyâyâsâ,' from these words with which it commences. It contains (1-9) earnest and fervid supplications of Zoroaster to Ahura Mazda soliciting divine grace, strength, and help for himself as well as his associates Vishtâspa, Frashaoshtra, etc., and all their successors to enable them to carry out their work; his solemn vow to consecrate his whole life to the propagation of truth and suppression of crime, reclaiming fallen people from vice to the path of virtue; (10-12) his firm invincible determination not to submit to temptation; and his earnest craving to be possessed of divine revelation.

Chapter II. is called 'Kshmaibyâ' (Yasna XXIX), likewise from this first word of this Hâ. (1-7) Here we find the whole living world personified as a Cow. She is represented complaining to Ahura Mazda against all sorts of evils and wickednesses prevalent in the world and expresses dissatisfaction with the existing state of things. (8) Ahura Mazda, thereupon, appoints Zoroaster as her deliverer. At first he does not answer her expectations, and so she is not satisfied with him,

for she thinks he is only a preacher and not the like of him she cares to have, *viz.* one of the exalted position of a king having worldly commanding power. (9-11) She, therefore, prays to Ahura Mazda to conform Zarathushtra and his associates to her ideal ; and the prayer having been granted, she is supposed to be pacified and comforted.

In Chapter III. (Yasna XXX.) (1-2) called 'At-tâ-Vakhshyâ,' is contained perhaps the first sermon addressed by Zoroaster to the people, in which he exhorts them to reckon Mazda as the ultimate cause and the only one worthy of adoration. He does not enforce faith by using coercion but leaves it to the exercise of each one's deliberate judgment and free option to make a choice of his course. "Hear with your own open ears, O good men ! see with your clear mind's eyes, and then choose your path, every man or woman to set to work independently to make the choice for his or herself." (3-8) He traces the origin of evil and disorder in the world to the beginning of the present cycle of time, and explains also how good and evil, order and disorder, have continued their perpetual fight in the world. He predicts the final triumph of good over evil. (9-11) In order to expedite this consummation, he exhorts all men to help on the good and defeat the evil and to that end acquire

the knowledge of pure religion by means of which alone the true happiness of mankind is secured.

In Chapter IV. (Yasna XXXI.) called 'Tâ-vê-urvâtâ,' the sermon of the III. Chapter is continued. (1) Again a short supplication is made for disclosing more light of revelation, (2-11) the power and greatness of the bestowment of Mazda, and how He created the world. (12-17) Men are incited to be righteous and industrious and they are praised, while they are harangued to avoid being unrighteous and slothful and escape being blamed. The unrighteous, the deceitful, and the unjust are beseechingly warned that Ahura Mazda is everywhere present watching all human actions and prone to reward the well-doers early or late according to their thoughts and deeds. (18-22) He exhorts his followers to close their ears against the insinuating words of the wicked and the unrighteous, to combat and overthrow them, and he assures them of the certainty of their receiving punishment for sins and rewards for good deeds in the next life.

Chapter V. (Yasna XXXII.) is called 'Khvaêtu-maiti.'—(1) The worshippers of the daêvas try to dissuade Zoroaster from his course and to induce him to come to some sort of a compromise in matters of the mission he had brought. (2-8) But he is not deluded into it and remains firm to his purpose and confronts

them that though in former times they have succeeded in leading astray some great but weak irresolute personages by such a device, for himself he would never allow himself to be tempted, allured and be deceived. (9-16) Then he denounces various kinds of hypocritical men who practise numerous sorts of vice and immorality while pretending to be engaged in reciting holy words. He censures this kind of hypocrisy.

Chapter VI. (Yasna XXXIII.) is called 'yathâish-itha'—(1-4) Zoroaster denounces the two-faced policy of propitiating not only the good but also the wicked at the same time, in view to avert their malignity and exhorts men to serve only the good, overthrow the evil, and to renounce disobedience to God, and also to renounce evil mind, pride and haughtiness, faithlessness and disloyalty, slander and injury to the innocent, especially to the industrious classes. (5) He inculcates obedience to God, piety and religiousness and walking on the path of truth. (6) Like the righteous devotee an industrious tiller of the soil is also an object of grace and favour to Ahura Mazda. (7-10) He also seeks divine light and help that he may always be able to hold forth these exalted doctrines in their sublimity, and he earnestly hopes that acts of devout charity may influence his followers. He beseeches to be taught the right prayer, offerings, and praises, that he may be

enabled to act righteously and obtain his due reward in both the present and future lives ; and he offers the same prayer for all righteous persons. (11-13) He begs for divine mercy, asks for strength, consolation, and the knowledge of the revelation of religion. (14) He offers to lay down his body and life in the service of Ahura Mazda.

Chapter VII. (Yasna XXXIV.) called 'yâ-shkya-ôthanâ.'—(1-3) Zoroaster promises Ahura Mazda to offer his services with all his mind, word, and deed, with worship, with deeds becoming holy men, with holy songs, praises, offerings, salutations, and with other proper means, by which he hopes to gain the reward in both the lives. (4) He praises before all others the fire of Ahura Mazda (universal heat and light) as the most valiant, most swift, most splendid, most cheering, and most helpful symbol to infuse fervor and zeal for prayers. (5) He inquires what actions would be pleasing to Ahura Mazda, to which he answers himself by saying that it is nothing less than affording protection to the virtuous in their poor condition and directing hatred and destruction towards the wicked. (6-7) He earnestly beseeches for the help of divine inspiration so that he may set an example in his person for the more firm worship and praise of God, and as he has not yet succeeded in securing from adherents



who could be depended on to stand by him as well in adversity as in prosperity, he therefore puts no trust in the help of any beings, temporal or spiritual, except in that of the only one God. (8-12) He is disgusted with the display of various kinds of sins and iniquities, injustice and ungodliness, and earnestly asks to be enlightened by God Himself in the perfect ways of Holiness and Good Mind. (13-14) The true path of religion which Ahura Mazda has revealed to him in the manner that he had revealed the same to other previous *Saoshyants* (chiefs of religion, those who benefit the world), is the way, the pursuit of which he exhorts is sure to lead to the attainment of the good final reward; and he prays that the same may be imbued into the whole corporeal world, by the help of which they may perform the deeds inspired by good mind and so participate in the divine good intelligence. (15) He concludes the Gâthâ by a fervent prayer to Ahura Mazda to reveal to him the best of words and deeds, by performing which with good mind and truth the work of 'Frashô-kereti,' i. e. the renovation of the world, may be accomplished according to the divine wish.

*Gâthâ Ushtavaiti.*—In Chapter I. (Yasna XLIII), called 'Ushtavaiti,' (1-2) Zoroaster invokes for sufficient strength to enable him to maintain holiness in

its purity, and places full trust and reliance in Mazda, supplicating Him to bless him with the perfect enjoyment of good mind and cheerfulness of spirit for all his life. (3-4) A holy man, who shows to others the path of truth and righteousness for both the worlds, attempts to approximate Ahura Mazda himself, who is the great helper and who bestows fitting recompense both to the wicked as well as the good. (5-6) In the beginning of the world it was decreed that thoughts, words, and deeds should be commensurately rewarded—punishment to the wicked and reward to the pious, both for this as well as for the future life. He is the Supreme Wisdom which none can ever deceive. (7-10) Being interrogated, examined and tested in various ways in his mind by the Divine Wisdom and being found firm and unshakable in his determination to heartily hate the evil and to contribute to the comfort of the good and to stand fast for ever in sounding the praise of and rendering service to Ahura Mazda, he is vouchsafed the privilege of receiving answers to his inquiries after the things of divine wisdom. Zoroaster having accepted fire as the visible symbol of worship, Ahura Mazda is pleased with this selection and graciously permits him to ask whatever questions he may desire to ask. If his questions were fit to be answered, they were to be

answered. (11-12) Zoroaster has some misgiving whether his preaching would be accepted by all his hearers. Wherefore he is advised to deliver his preachings after invoking and succeeding in being inspired with 'Asha,' holiness, and 'Sraosha,' devotion. (13) Zoroaster asks for a visible helper on the earth and obtains the chieftainship of a valiant hero whom no man could dare to oppose—an allusion to king Vishtâspa. (14) Whereupon being comforted obviously by the holy spirit, Zoroaster along with his associates undertakes to preach. (15-16) The first thing preached by him is an injunction against humbling before and propitiating the evil to avert injury. He exhorted abjuring against befriending the *daêvas*, and to make an open declaration to take the side of the Most Beneficent One, by means of which he is confident the world would be as strong and as happy as it was in the reign of the sun-like (Jamshid).

Chapter II. (Yasna XLIII), called 'Tat-thwâperesâ.'—Zarathushtra puts questions to Ahura Mazda to be enlightened on various topics and is lucky to have received their proper answers. Some of the questions consist of the following: (1) How the *namâz*, *i. e.* daily divine service and salutations are to be offered, whereby to obtain the help of good mind, and truth? (2) How this world was first created?

How has it gradually evolved ? How the causes of decay and death have entered into it and how these fundamental causes are to be guarded against ? (3) How by Ahura Mazda order was evolved out of disorder ? How by Him the invariable path of the sun and stars was fixed ? How by Him the moon came to wax and wane ? "Each of these several matters, O Mazda, as well as others not questioned I beg to know." (4) Who is it, if not Thou, who is the holder of the earth and sky, and who does not let them fall down ? Who, if not Thou, is the holder of the waters and trees ? Who, if not Thou, makes the winds and clouds fly quickly ? Who, if not Thou, is the maker and creator of mankind ? (5) Who, if not Thou, is the skilful producer of light and darkness, who else of sleep and wakefulness, of morning, noon, and night ? (6) Tell me the truth that I may proclaim the same to the world that tilling the ground (industrial pursuits) is no less meritorious than performing religious ceremonies. (7-8) What is the hidden secret of love and respect exchanged between parents and children ? (9) How is the purification of mind and body to be performed by holy priests ? (10) How patiently and resignedly one should put up with inconveniences and injuries arising from acting according to the tenets of thy Religion which is the

best of all ? (11) How can I acquire earlier foresight of coming dangers before all others ? (12) Why is one naturally good and why another naturally evil ? (13) How are we to drive away Lie and its consequences, destruction, from us ? How shall we put down those who, full of disobedience to Thee, do not love the good mind ? (14) How shall I use the mysterious potency of Thy word in order to counteract and drive away falsehood ? (15-16) How well shall I derive moral courage by calling upon and remembering Thee when I may have to encounter evil, defeat foes and adversaries ? (17) How well am I entitled to partake of the food consecrated to Thy name and in Thy honour with perfect satisfaction and get the solace of the same after I have recited the proper formulæ ? (18) How am I, after performing the ceremony of high sacrifice in company of my associates, altogether numbering up a body of ten performers, to get the return of the value of ten horses, ten mares and one camel ? (19) What is the condign punishment for him who does not pay the proper wages to whom they are due, and what the reward of him who does so ? (20) Are the *Daevas* to be worshipped ? Certainly not. But then what becomes of these *karapans* and *usiksh* and *kavas* who, sacrificing the Cow (living world) at the altar of 'Āêshma' (wilfulness, violence, abandon-

ment) make her weep for being frustrated instead of being allowed to do her proper work to fecundate the field ?

Chapter III. (Yasna XLV) is called 'At-Fra-vakhsyâ.' In this occurs the second and most impressive sermon of Zoroaster which begins thus: (1) "I proclaim, now give ears to it, now hear all ye who look to me from near and afar. Now it is all made manifest to me. Verily be ye the worshippers of Mazda, that the evil-speaking wicked one (of the twins) having turned back may not spoil the life a second time during this cycle by evil belief and tongue." (2) Continuing his sermon he says that in the beginning of the present cycle of time there were two principles—one Spentomainsyush and the other Angromainsyush. They could not agree in any one single point. One was utterly opposed to the other in every respect. Their strife continues on from the commencement upto now and shall not terminate till the end arrives of the present cycle. (3) As a means of bringing about the defeat of the evil principle Ahura Mazda had previously ordered the holy word of Ahuna Vairya which comprised the substance of the whole religion of God. This mysterious word Ahura Mazda revealed to Zoroaster in order to teach mankind saying at the same time that for them who do not

think, speak, and act according to it, shall be woe awaiting at the end of life. (4) Ahura Mazda is known by means of holiness, He being the father of Good Mind and loving the Perfect Well-working Wisdom as his daughter. "Not ever to be deceived is the omnipresent Ahura." (5) Those who will give ear to the message of Ahura Mazda promulgated by Zarathushtra to mankind shall be happy. (6-7) Praise ye with truth Him who is the Giver of good, in order that He may teach us with His best wisdom. (8-11) Then Zarathushtra exhorts his hearers to worship Him, Ahura Mazda only, some passages of which we have quoted above *verbatim* (pp. 18-20).

Chapter IV. (Yasna XLVI), called 'Kâm-na-maezâm.'—Formidable enemies and opponents of Zoroaster seem to have arisen probably on account of the above referred to outspoken sermon which he had lately delivered. (1-3) In the beginning of this chapter he complains to Ahura Mazda that even his relations had forsaken him. The wicked rulers persecuted him and he had no refuge to fly to but that of Ahura Mazda. "I know, O Mazda, that I am helpless. I am shorn of wealth and of followers. I cry before Thee. Look to me, O Ahura, inspire me with comfort as a friend would do....." and so on. (4-6) He complains bitterly of the violence, slaughter,

and rapine prevalent around him. He complains of those who, though in a position to give charity, withhold it like misers, and of those who are inhospitable and of those who slander the innocent. (7) Overwhelmed on all sides, he seeks refuge from Ahura Mazda in the well-known words of 'kem-nâ-mazdâ' which afterwards came to be adopted as a daily prayer by every Zoroastrian. (8-10) Strengthened by the virtue of the efficacious prayer, he resumes his exhortations, and promises the reward of heaven to those men and women who will fight against the evil and keep themselves faithful to Ahura Mazda. (11) He reproaches in very forcible words those who, having ears, remain wilfully deaf and those who, having eyes, remain wilfully blind ; and he warns them of the punishment of hell in the next life. (12) He praises the descendants of Fryâna, the Turanian, who took his side enthusiastically, and assures them that they would be comforted by Ahura Mazda Himself. (13-14) At this juncture one of his associates exhorts and promises blessings to those mortals who would befriend Spitama Zarathushtra. He asks the Prophet : " O Zarathushtra ! who is thy righteous friend for thy great sacrifice (work) ?". The answer is : " It is he, the kayani Vishtâspa." Nevertheless the full faith and trust of Zoroaster is in the help derived from remembering



God. (15-19) After this some of his followers and relations such as the descendants of Spitama, Frashao-shtra and Jamaspa of the family of Hvogva rally round him. He earnestly assigns certain duties to them and declares in return the reward of heaven in the future life.

*Gāthā Spentā-Mainyu.*—Chapter I. (Yasna XLVII) is called 'Spenta Mainyu.' (1) It commences with a prayer asking for reward of heaven for good thought, good word, and good deed through Spento-Mainyush, *i. e.*, Bahman. (2) Then follows an affirmation that Mazda protects those who sing His praises with their tongues and perform good deeds with their hands. (3) The world figuratively called the Cow, is created for him who gives ease and growth to it. (4) But the wicked are enemies of Spento-Mainyu, because they destroy it. (5-6) God gives good things to the good as a reward for their holiness and worth, while through the wicked Angromainyush bad returns are obtained by the wicked according to their deeds. This is the uniform law for the good as well as for the wicked.

Chapter II. (Yasna XLVIII) called Yêzidâ.—(1) That at last truth shall overcome falsehood is a position upheld by Zoroaster. But his opponent denies it and asserts that the wicked Dævas are immortal, and that whatever is, is good. (2) Whereupon Zarathushtra

earnestly inquires of Ahura Mazda whether the fight of the twins, *i. e.*, good and evil, is to last eternally or ultimately shall have an end ? Whether the good will eventually overcome the evil or not ? Is the present form of life good ? (3) Are not the efforts of those who work on the lines of the mysterious words and who endeavour to resemble Thee in their wisdom of good mind, to be crowned with success at last ? (4) Is the doctrine of him, who sanctions both the good as well as the evil mind, speech and work, right ? Will not Thy wisdom at last prevail ? The answer is supposed to be in support of Zoroaster's anticipations. (5-8) Then as a means to expedite this much-wished-for result, *viz.* the final and permanent victory of the good over evil, of order over disorder, certain commands are given, the chief of them being the right government of the good, just, and the righteous persons and the overthrow of those of the contrary qualities, the propagation of good wisdom and actions, purification of man—both in mind and in body—from birth to death, cultivation of the earth and rearing of cattle, good habitation of men, suppression of violence, slaughter, rapine, theft, and robbery, in short, all actions according to the will and government of God and the religion propagated by Zarathushtra. (9-11) Here again the Prophet earnestly longs for the sup-

pression of the evil religion of his opponents, such as *karapans*, the *Angirasas*, and the bad governors of countries. (12) He earnestly longs for the spread of truth, wisdom, good settlement, freedom from the cruel oppressors, and the wisdom of the good mind, so that the *Saoshyants*, *i. e.* the benefactors of the people, may find hindrances removed from their path and the people propitiate Ahura Mazda with good mind, words and deeds, becoming, according to the law of Ahura Mazda, the right opponents of Aeshma (self-wilfulness, Violence).

Chapter III. (Yasna XLIX) is called 'At-má-yavá.'—(1-3) Here we find Zarathushtra suffering from a heavy continual sickness which is difficult to be removed. He, therefore, prays Ahura Mazda to hear his prayers and come to his help with Good Mind and Truth, and free him from the illness. This illness has made him very weary. It is brought upon him by an envious and deceitful wicked person, who has neither holy Wisdom, nor does he consult Good Mind. From this Zarathushtra is led in to the firm belief in his doctrine that truth and goodness alone will benefit man while lie and wickedness will in all respects hurt him. Are the services of both of them—good and evil—desirable for man? Of course not. Therefore says Zarathushtra: "I renounce all the followers of the wicked." (4)

Then he goes on to exhort mankind, saying that all those who through evil knowledge increase violence, slaughter, rapine, etc., also those who waste the good things given by God, and also those who instead of doing good deeds perform evil acts—they follow the daeva-worshippers whose religion is the religion of the wicked. (5) But those who increase the wealth and abundance of the people by encouraging and protecting agriculture, spreading good religion, truth and wisdom, they all are possessors of the realm of God. (6-7) He exhorts the propagation of the religion together with its knowledge and ritual, so that all, great or small, may hear it, understand it, and practise it. (8) He asks Ahura Mazda to confer the office of His messenger upon himself, Frashaoshtra, and all his associates, and promises on behalf of them as well as himself to do all that may be needful. (9-11) He proclaims the certain doom in hell of the evil rulers, evil workers, evil speakers, evil religionists, evil-minded and wicked persons. (12) In as much as unlike those persons he invokes and praises Ahura Mazda, he earnestly wishes for help from Mazda imploring the highest favour that he may be the best loved by him.

Chapter IV. (Yasna L.) called 'kat-môî-urvâ.'—Here again the Prophet seems to be somehow hardpressed, and he, therefore, invokes the help of Ahura Mazda

in a strain similar to that of 'Kem-nâ-Mazdâ.' (1) He had no protector left for himself and his property. He, therefore, reposes full trust in Ahura Mazda, as he always does under such circumstances of difficulty and danger, and asks his protection. (2-3) He complains that the world, figuratively called the Cow, is not given the requisite nourishment, nor taken care of by the husbandmen as they should, nor given as a gift to the humane persons who may make her prosperous, and, therefore, she has fallen in the clutches of wicked. (4-5) Seeing this state of affairs he and his associates praise, worship, and supplicate Ahura Mazda for them as His psalmists to cast a favourable and benign glance and come to their help. (6) One of the associates prays that more eloquence be granted to Zarathushtra to explain to them the divine mysteries. (7-8) Whereupon Zoroaster in reply praises Ahura Mazda with greater enthusiasm and asks for His help. He promises to celebrate His praises in verses and to meet Him in worship with uplifted hands and bowing head, when he having become free from the present difficulties would be enabled to dominate according to His will. (9-10) And whenever he would be able to see with the help of good mind the precious sights of morning, noon, and evening reminding him of his obligations to discharge his duties of daily prayers, he

promises to speak out with his open mouth the hymns of divine praises and to persevere in it as long as his strength and power would last. (11) At last he prays that the sacred desire of the truth-seekers to renovate the world may be fulfilled as is the design and will of God.

*Gatha Vohukhshathra.*—This Gatha consists of only one chapter which is named ‘vohukhshathra.’ (Yasna LI.) (1-2) In this Zoroaster asserts that by performing ceremonial worship power and prosperity are obtained. He expresses a desire to perform those deeds of worship and obtain their reward. (3-5) He inquires after the mystery of the ‘Ameshá-spentás’ and then he goes on inquiring further after the reward of merit obtained by giving cows, got by lawful means, in charity in due and proper time and without coercion to deserving persons. (6) Then he alludes to the principal doctrine of reward and punishment, according to one’s desert—good to the good, evil to the evil in after life. (7-10) He prays for that good reward and preaches the same doctrine, inculcating upon his hearers the excellence of ceremonial worship and its reward after death. He reproves the worship according to the manner of the Daôvayasna people. (11) One of his associates asks : “ Whom Zarathushtra Spitama would accept as his friend and whom he would hate as his

enemy ? ” (12-14) The answer is : “ The sodomites and all those who waste the human semen as well as those who bury dead bodies in the earth are his enemies. Besides these those who following the religion of the wicked spoil the true religion of Zarathushtra. These are sure to go to hell. Again his constant enemies the *karapans* and also those who do not appease the disconsolate Cow (disappointed living world) by words or deeds are also sure to go to hell.” (15) Then on a sudden his thoughts turn to the “magavans” whom he reproaches for their advocacy of celibate life. (16-21) He puts before them the examples of Vishtâspa, Frashaoshtra, Jâmâspa, Maidhyomaongha and all his associates who adopting settled married life have deserved rewards in both lives. (22) The chapter concludes with the praise of the mystery of the names of ‘Ameshâ spentas.’

*Gatha Vahishtoishti.*—This Gatha also consists of one chapter only which is called after the same name. (Yasna LIII.) It consists of the last will or testament of Zarathushtra Spitama. (1-2) He appoints as his successors after his demise his immediate disciples Kavi Vishtâspa and Frashaoshtra and others. And for all future time he appoints as his successors, persons qualified and fit and wise to be high priests (Dasturs). He defines their chief duty to consist in removing

doubts and difficulties in religious matters according to the chief doctrine promulgated in the Mazdayasni religion, when questioned on the subject. (3) He orders Pouruchisti, his youngest unmarried daughter, to follow the advice of his successors until she gets married with a good husband, which he expressly enjoins on her to accomplish. (4) He commands every woman professing his religion to use her influence in making her father, husband, and all other relations, holy men following the dictates of a good mind. If they do so, they are promised the reward of heaven to be bestowed by Ahura Mazda. (5) He earnestly admonishes all marrying couples to remember his advice, that their chief happiness shall consist in loving each other, in living a life of good mind and in performing religious deeds in conjunction, having put on the visible signs of his religion. (6-7) He earnestly commands all men and women to guard themselves carefully against lie and strictly to abjure the ceremonial worship of strange gods and evil spirits, considering it the sure path leading to hell. (8-9) He enjoins the rulers of men in all times to use their power, influence and authority in bringing over evil persons to the right path.

Here ends the whole summary of the five Gathas. We shall now pass on to the Yasna, and shall only



briefly enumerate the subjects treated in its several chapters.

In Chapter I. and II. the sacrificial worship commences. First Ahura Mazda and the several Lords of the invisible and visible worlds are invited to the ceremony.

Chapters III-VII.—This part is technically called ‘Sarosh Darun.’ Here the objects of propitiation are enumerated and other praises sung and they are all presented to the holy beings supposed to have arrived there in response to the above invitation.

Chapter VIII.—The Zaothâ or the principal performer of the ceremony tastes a bit of the consecrated holy unleavened bread, and delivers the rest of it to other Zoroastrians, at the same time enjoining them not to eat of it without reciting the regulated formulæ before and after it.

Chapters IX-X.—This portion is called Haomayashî. Haoma (Vedic Soma) is the name of a plant from which juice was extracted by pounding it in a mortar called ‘Hâvana’ with a pestle. It is said to have the property of infusing a sensation of exhilaration in the drinker. Now-a-days only a few dry twigs of the plant are used by Parsi priests for the purpose. In these two chapters the praises of this sacred drink are sung in verses of a non-Gathic character,

Chapter XI.—After reciting a short prelude the consecrated Haoma juice is tasted by Zaothâ, the principal performer of the ceremony.

Chapters XII.-XIII.—This part is called 'Fraoreti,' also 'Astaothwana', *i.e.*, the Mazdayasnian confession of faith. In this the daevas and evil persons and all sorts of evils are vehemently renounced and the Mazdayasnian faith, its doctrines, and morals and polity are unreservedly confessed.

Chapters XIV.-XVIII.—The sacrifice continues. The archangels, angels, various kinds of fire such as the lightning fire, the fire in the body of man, in plants, etc., are praised and glorified.

Chapters XIX.-XXI.—This part is technically called 'Baghân yasht.' The first Hâ, or chapter, is the Zend or commentary on the Ahuna Vairya formula, the second on the Ashem Vohu formula, and the third on the Yênghê Hâtâm.

Chapters XXII.-XXVI.—The sacrifice continues in which the naming and presentation of the objects of offering, spoken of above, are repeated in a slightly different form, the principal characteristic being a slight addition in the details of the invocations of the Fravashis or the spirits of holy beings.

Chapter XXVII.—This is a prelude to the singing of five Gâthâs of Zarathushtra along with the preparation of a libation to be offered at last to waters.

Chapters XXVIII.-XXXIV.—Gatha Ahunavaiti as summarised above.

Chapters XXXV.-XLI.—This part is called ‘yasna Haptanghâiti,’ *i.e.*, the Yasna of the seven chapters. It ranks in antiquity next to the Gathas. The dialect is somewhat Gathic. Here along with prayers and invocations to Ahura Mazda the praises and the glorification of various beings such as the Fravashis, the Fire, the Waters, the kine, etc. appear in the Gathic dialect for the first time. “A considerable period of time must have elapsed since the Gathas had been composed, and a lengthy period must also be supposed to have passed before the Avesta of the later type began to be sung and recited.”\*

Chapter XLII.—This part is called ‘Apara Yasna Haptanghâiti,’ *i.e.*, a supplement to the above mentioned Yasna Haptanghâiti. Here sundry objects of nature are praised and glorified.

Chapters XLIII.-XLVI.—Gatha Ushtavaiti as summarised above.

Chapters XLVII.-L.—Gatha Spentâmainyu as summarised above.

Chapter LI.—Gatha Vohukhshatra as summarised above.

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\* Sacred Books of the East. Vol. XXXI., p. 282.

Chapter LII.—This part contains a very interesting prayer for sanctity and its benefits, and detached from the other portions is recited at daydawn as the early morning prayer called the Hoshbâm prayer.

Chapter LIII.—Gatha Vahishtoisti as summarised above.

Chapter LIV.—This Chapter is called 'Airyamâi shyo.' It is an invocation to Airyaman supposed to preside over marriage.

Chapter LV.—Praise and glorification of the Gathas (?)

Chapter LVI.—Introduction to 'Sarosh Yasht.'

Chapter LVII.—The Sarosh Yasht. It is a composition in praise of 'Sarosh' *i. e.* Devotion and Holy Obedience personified.

Chapters LVIII-LIX.—Fshûshô-Mâthra and Staota Yasnya. This part contains the praises and glorification of divine service and the rearing of cattle and a settled mode of life.

Chapter LX.—This part is called Dahma-Afriti and is composed of prayers for the dwelling of the sacrificer.

Chapter LXI.—Herein is praised the efficacy of the three Baghas, commented upon in chapters XIX, XX, XXI in various encounters with evil beings.

Chapter LXII.—Praise and glorification of fire.

Chapters LXIII-LXX.—Praise and glorification of waters.

Chapters LXXI.-LXXII.—Praise and glorification of all who belong to the party of Spentó-Mainyush, *i.e.* the Good Mind.

The *Bajs* are a certain abridgement of chapters 3-8 of the yasna to be recited in honour of several holy invisible beings. They are used in the ceremony of 'Darûn-châshni' *i.e.*, tasting of a certain kind of sacrificial unleavened bread, somewhat resembling the show-bread of the Jews.

The following is a brief summary of some important facts from the Vendidâd.

FARGARD I.—(1-2) It commences with a statement of the object of the Vendidâd *i.e.*, the rules and regulations intended to prevent and counteract the evils caused by the Daevas or various physical and moral impurities. At the period of the Vendidâd the Mazdayasnians were suffering from various natural and moral evils in countries inhabited by them and from neglect of sanitation. Sixteen most prominent of these are enumerated with the baneful consequences peculiar to them, while many more are left unnamed. It was to ward off those evils and many more others that the laws were given. (3-21) They are as follows:—

Names of countries identified in Achæminian cuneiform inscriptions, Greek, and Modern Persian writers.	Counteracting Evils.
1. Airyana Vaêjo ... ..	{ The serpent in the river and excessive- ly severe winter.
2. Sughdha = Suguda = Sog- diana = Sughd ... ..	{ The vermin 'skaitya' which brings death to cattle.
3. Mouru = Margu = Margiana = Merv ... ..	{ Sinful lust.
4. Bâkhdi = Bakhtri = Bactria = Balkh or Bokhara ... ..	{ Bravara = (Skr.) Bhramara <i>i.e.</i> , wasp.
5. Nisaya = Nisaya = Nisaia = Nisâ ... ..	{ Melancholia, hypo- chondria (Skr. vaimanasya).
6. Haroyu = Haraiva = Areia = Hari or Herat ... ..	{ Hoar-frost, hail, and beggary.
7. Vaêkereta ... ..	{ The pairika Khnâ- thaiti (?)
8. Urvâ = Urghun (?) ... ..	{ Fornication (?) Skr. abhisârâ (?)
9. Khnenta in Vehrâna = Varkâna = Gorgan ... ..	{ The sin of unnatural offences.
10. Harakhvaiti = Harauvati = Arakutos = Hârût ... ..	{ The sin of burning the dead.
11. Haêtumant = Etymandros = Helmund ... ..	{ Abuses of the sexual organs.

12. Ragha=Raga=Rae...	...	Hypochondria.
13. Chakhra=Karkh (?)	...	{ The sin of burning the corpses.
14. Varena ... ..	...	{ Abnormal menstruation and fornication with the non-Zoroastrian(?)
15. Hapta hindu=Sapta- sindhu=Sind ... ..	...	{ Abnormal issues in women and exces- sive heat.
16. Land by the floods of the Ranghâ ... ..	...	{ Excessive winter.

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FARGARD II.—(1-19) The peculiar laws of purity to be described hereafter are spoken of as sure to bring about happy results, because by the practice of similar laws in the time of Jamshed, the Iranians were very happy and healthy. The Vendidad writer says that Jamshed brought about that desirable result by enforcing these laws at the instance of Ahura Mazda. Jamshed pleaded his inability to propagate a religion like the coming one of Zarathushtra in its completeness. But by putting similar laws into force he made the people thrive and increase and freed them from disease and to relieve the over population he had to resort to emigration three times. (20-24) He saved living creatures from the destructive effect of the

dire winter by teaching them how to protect themselves against its influences. (25-43). He built a model city called 'Varejamkard,' where the inhabitants led the most happy and healthy life.

FARGARD III.—In this chapter fifteen tenets of Zoroastrianism relating chiefly to municipal affairs, the disposal of the dead, sanitation, agriculture and industry are spoken of in metaphorical language.

(1-6) The following five places are said to be occupied usefully and are therefore pleasing to the spirit of the earth: (1) that of holy worship, (2) that of the house of a holy man, (3) that of cultivation, pasture and gardening, (4) the place set apart for flocks and herds, (5) the place where manure is prepared.

(7-11) The following five places are spoken of as occupied harmfully and therefore are displeasing to the spirit of the earth: (1) Arezura (probably a place of Daeva-worship) where evil spirits congregate, (2) a burial ground, (3) where Dakhmas *i. e.* catacombs are built in which corpses of men are deposited, (4) where there are burrows of noxious animals, (5) where excessive mourning is carried on.

(12-13) The following are said to be five acts of great merit: (1) to dig out corpses buried in the earth; (2) to demolish the Dakhmas or catacombs;—(14) (Here by way of digression a warning is given to the corpse-



bearer not to carry a corpse alone for it would cause the greatest pollution to the bearer himself. (15-21) A rule is given for the Nasāsālār, *i. e.*, professional bearer of corpses that he shall live in a most clean and dry place apart from other Zoroastrians. He shall not have to earn for himself but shall be provided by the community with the necessary food and raiment which must be of the strongest kind till he grows old and is unable to further carry on his work. Thenceforth he shall live as a pensioner in a building resembling a tower near the spot where the corpses of Zoroastrians are laid open to be devoured by carnivorous birds and to watch their bones that they may not be dispersed everywhere)—(22-23) (3) to fill up the burrows of noxious animals; (4) to cultivate corn, grass, and food ;—(24-33) (Here is a digression in praise of cultivation and industry in general and against idleness, sloth, and beggary. There is also an expression of disapproval of the unmarried state of women )—(34-35) (5) to give alms to deserving pious persons, especially the first fruits of the cultivation.—Not to give due alms is a sin.

(36-42) Then follow the prescriptions for atonement against the sin of omission to disinter corpses buried in the earth through stress of necessity after the occasion therefrom has ceased and to expose them in order to have them consumed by ravenous birds and beasts.

Finally an injunction is given not to commit a sin in the belief and hope that it can be afterwards adequately atoned for. "Prevention is better than cure" is justly applicable, most of all, in matter of sin.

FARGARD IV.—(1-16) In this chapter certain breaches of the civil and criminal law are enumerated. Reference is made to the subject of damages for breach of contract and its penalties. (17-43) The criminal offences referred to are intimidation, assault, hurt, wounds causing blood to flow, broken-bones, manslaughter.

(44-45) Reference is then made to the necessity of helping co-religionists in matters of material wealth, marriage, and education. Here by way of digression a direction for the pursuit of studies is given. "He shall study during the first third of the day and the last third, during the first third of the night and the last third, that his mind may grow and increase in knowledge and wax strong in holiness: so shall he sit up with humility and holiness that he may advance in knowledge: he shall rest during the middle third of the day and of the night, and thus shall he continue until he can repeat all the words which the former Aôthrapaitiss have learnt."

(46-48) Then it is forbidden to grudge remuneration to learned priests. Married life is preferable to celibacy.

Preserving health by proper food is preferred to emaciating the body by fasting. The educated is more useful than the illiterate.

(49-55) Then it is taught that possession of property diminishes crime. For generally indigence leads to the committal of crimes of theft, rapine, and so on, and the consequential punishments for their offences in the shape of corporeal chastisement, imprisonment, being hurled down from steep rocks, banishment from the land of birth and the like. The same cause also leads to trials by ordeals such as passing through hot boiling water and so on.

FARGARD V.—(1-7). This chapter says firstly that if a man involuntarily or unconsciously defiles fire, water, or earth with dead matter it is no sin, and (8-9) that it is through the ignorance of men that water and fire cause harm to them. (10-14) Then the manner of disposing of the dead during the rigour of winter is described. (15-20) Man is absolved from responsibility for the defilement caused by rain falling from heavens on dead matter, his chief duty being confined to promote purity in nature as far as it lies in his power—(21-26) Here again by way of digression the precept laid down by Zarathushtra Spitama in a line of his Gathas, *viz.* "Purity is for man after birth the greatest good" is dilated upon at length. This precept

is the foundation of the whole Vendidad.

(27-38) Further on we find how infection spreads by contact, and are defined the rules (39-44) for the purification of sacrificial implements defiled by dead matter, and (45-56) the treatment of women who have been delivered of a still-born child.

(57-59) Dead bodies must be dressed with clean but old worn out castaway clothes.

(60) To waste anything of value is forbidden even so insignificant as a small piece of thread.

FARGARD VI.—In this chapter the following subjects are treated of:—

(1-9) How long the earth remains unclean when defiled by dead ?—

(10-25) Atonement for sins of defiling the ground with dead matter.—(26-41) Purification of different kinds of water when defiled by the dead. (42-43) Purification of the Haoma defiled by the dead.

(44-48) Corpses must be placed on hills or raised platforms exposed open to the sun.

(49-51) When only their bones come into a dry condition that they should be preserved in *Astodâns*, i. e. bone receptacles.

FARGARD VII.—This chapter treats of the following:—

(1-5) Different kinds of infections resulting

from death caused by natural causes or by violence or otherwise.

(6-11) How the infection of a dead body permeates through a number of persons in close contact.

(12-22) How to purify clothes defiled by the dead.

(23-27) Eating of human corpses is an abomination, so is defiling waters and fire by them.

(28-35) How to cleanse wood and corn defiled by the dead.

(36-40) Candidates for medicine of various kinds and their probation and granting license to practice.

(41-44) The fees of physicians paid in large or small cattle according to the status of the patient and according to the usage of those times.

(45-59) Purification of the earth defiled by corpses and of the dakhmas or catacombs, because they spread various kinds of diseases.

(60-72) Treatment of a woman delivered of a still-born child.

(73-75) How to cleanse things made of various kinds of metals, wood, etc. defiled by the dead.

(76-77) How to purify domestic animals defiled by the dead.

(78-79) The risk of sin for a wrongful act, though done with good intent.

FARGARD VIII.—In this chapter the following

subjects are treated of:—

(1-3) Purification of the wood-work of a house if it came in contact with a dead body.

(4-13) How to keep in a snug place in the house the dead body of a person during the inclemency of the weather. How the corpse-bearers should purify themselves.

(14-22) Who are to walk in front of a funeral procession and in what manner.

(23-30) No clothes more than needful to be wasted on a corpse.

(31-32) The abomination of the sin of sodomy.

(33-34) A corpse in a dry condition does not contaminate.

(35-36) How to purify the man defiled by corpses in different conditions.

(37-72) The ceremony of 'Barashnâm' without isolation for nine nights.

(73-80) How to purify fire defiled by the dead.

(81-96) The meritorious act of collecting fire in a Dâdgâh (Fire-altar) from various smithies where it is defiled by dead matter, and from this purification the nature of forming the basis of consecrating fire and erecting fire temples.

(97-107) How to purify oneself when defiled in the wilderness.

FARGARD IX.—In this chapter the ‘noshabeh’ or the nine nights’ Barashnûm is fully described. (1-36) At first the description of the ‘Barashnûm-gáh’ *i.e.*, the place for purifying the unclean is given. Then the description of the purification follows in detail.

(37-50) The fees of the purifier are determined according to the rank and means of the person purified.

(51-57) Who is a false purifier? And how is he to be punished?

FARGARD X.—In this chapter certain stanzas of the Gathas of Zarathushtra Spitama are spoken of as holy spells for exorcising evil spirits. How many times they are to be repeated and what exorcisms follow in consequence.

FARGARD XI.—This chapter, like the preceding, is composed of spells intended to drive away evil spirits from various objects such as the house, the fire, the water, etc.

FARGARD XII.—In this chapter the limits of the periods for mourning according to the degrees of relationship with the dead person are spoken of. After the expiration of the prescribed time a simple kind of washing of the body, house, etc., together with certain ceremonies is to be performed.

FARGARD XIII.—This chapter treats of the canine race.

(1-9) Which of this kind of animals are useful and which are harmful ?

(10-16) Heavy sin for injuring dogs.

(17-19) What are the several purposes of dogs ?

(20-28) Proper food for the dog.

(29-38) The treatment of the mad dog.

(39-40) What are the good qualities of the dog ?

(41-43) The connection of the dog and the wolf.

(44-48) What are the virtues and vices of the dog ?

(49) Some praises of the dog.

(50-56) The offence of killing the water dog.

FARGARD XIV.—This chapter contains various ways of atonement for sins, such as (2-3) sacrifices; providing loads of clean, hard, well-dried, well-examined fuel and fragrant incense and sweet-scented plant woods for holy fires; (4) ceremonies with Barosma with offerings of libations, Haoma, and the sacred meat; (5-6) killing of snakes, scorpions, frogs, corn-carrying ants, earth worms, horrid flies and such other noxious animals; filling up the burrows of noxious animals; (7-11) providing implements for the consecrated fire and implements for the priests, warriors and husbandmen; (12) digging canals for public use; (13-14) presenting arable land and houses with oxstalls to godly men; (15) promoting marriages of virgin maids; (16) building bridges for public use; (17-18) giving food of meat,



bread and wine to godly men, and so on.

FARGARD XV.—In this chapter some heinous crimes are enumerated. (1-8) Five of them are (1) to slander the innocent, (2) to injure a shepherd's dog, (3) to smite a bitch big with young, (4) to cohabit with a menstruous woman, (5) to cohabit with a pregnant woman.

(9-19) Adultery and procuring miscarriage after unlawful unions are also heinous crimes. The adulterer must support the seduced female and her offspring if any. (20-51) Taking care of children and puppies.

FARGARD XVI.—In this chapter some rules for the guidance of women during their menstruation are given.

(1-7) She must rest herself in a dry place, apart from holy fire, water and holy ceremonies; and take her food apart in vessels of metals. The food must be suitable to her condition and neither too much nor too little. (8-11) From three to nine nights is the normal period of her natural sickness; if it continues beyond that period it is to be accounted as unnatural. (12) How she is to wash herself. (13-18) It is a heinous crime to cohabit with her in that state.

FARGARD XVII.—Hair after shaving and combing, and nails after cutting must be carefully removed from the body as well as the house and should be

deposited in holes dug in the ground.

FARGARD XVIII.—In this chapter the following subjects are treated.

(1-6) How to distinguish between true and false priests. An educated, industrious, and zealous priest is a true one; while an ignorant, slothful, and sleep-loving priest is a false one.

(7-12) Warning against the heretics who pervert the religion.

(13-29) Usefulness of the cock in making the faithful shake off sleep and rise early in order to be employed in the discharge of their proper duties.

(30-59) Four kinds of detriment to the body arising from want of cleanliness and how to remove them. They are: (1) the neglect of proper clothing, (2) the seminal discharge while passing water, (3) the same during sleep, and (4) omission to put on the 'sadra and kusti' *i. e.* sacred shirt and sacred girdle, after the age of fifteen years. The last is to be remedied by performing the Naozot ceremony without any delay.

(60-65) Persons indulging in any kind of sinful lust are the greatest enemies of Ahura Mazda. Their sins are like the sins of doing the greatest harm to the creation of Ahura Mazda. They are no better than snakes, wolves, and such other noxious animals.

(66-76) Some atonements for the sin of cohabiting with a woman during her menstruation. Most of them are those enumerated in the Fargard XIV.

FARGARD XIX.—This Fargard is very important, as it describes a crisis in the life of Zarathushtra Spitama. (1-9) Once an attempt was made to kill Zarathushtra, but it was frustrated by his foresight and watchfulness. Having taken a warning from the event, he rose up and went forward and openly expressed his resolution not to flinch from the work of defeating everything evil, which he had taken in hand and which he hoped would be continued by his followers till the time of the last Saoshyant (the end of the present Cycle). Seeing him so firm, a policy of persuasion was adopted by the opposite party, who set the example of others before him and dissuaded him from propagating his religion. At the same time the temptation of giving him a large kingdom was offered, if he gave up his good work. But Zoroaster disdainfully rejected it and announced his determination to stick to his resolve even at the risk of life.

(10-16) Zoroaster applies to Ahura Mazda for a revelation of the law and is taught how to remove uncleanness and what the objects of homage are. (17-25) Then he is taught how to perform holy ceremonies and how to purify men and things, which

may have been defiled, by the ceremonies of large and small Barashnûms. (26-42) After that he receives the revelation about the passage of the human soul after death from this world to the next.

(43-47) Seeing him thus perfected and despairing of bringing him round, his opponents leave, and fly away from him.

FARGARD XX.—This chapter is important, as it alludes to the origin of the art of healing among the Iranians. 'Thrita' of the family of 'Sâmas' and the father of the renowned hero Keresâspa, was the first healer. He practised the dispensing of herbal and metallic medicines and was successful in curing several diseases.

FARGARD XXI.—In this chapter the cow and the rain water and the light of the sun, moon, and stars are praised as being powerful means for removing diseases.

FARGARD XXII.—In this chapter Airyaman, who was believed to preside over married life, is praised and is described as able to remove innumerable diseases by inculcating cleanliness and regimen of life upon mankind.

The following is a brief summary of some of the Yashts:—

HORMAZD YASHT.—(1-4) Of all the holy Mâthrâs

that of the Amshâspandic names is the most efficacious. (5-9) There are twenty other names assigned to Ahura Mazda, which are enumerated here and which proclaim certain sublime characteristics. These are also said to be efficacious. (10-19) Besides these about fifty other names are given, and their remembrance and recitation day and night are enjoined for the reciters' welfare.

Latterly when Pazend prayers were composed a hundred and one names were assigned to God, which are still extant and are recited with closed lips at the commencement of the Yasna. In the "Nirange-Kusti" of the Kadimi Parsis, it is said that God has 1001 names. There are 1001 names of Allah among the Muhammedans and 1001 names of Vishnu among the Hindus.

(20-23) Conclusion of the Yasht. (24-33) There is a small appendix attached to this Yasht which some say is a fragment of Bahman Yasht that is now lost.

ABAN YASHT.—This is a beautiful piece of ancient Iranian composition. Much valuable information about the ancient kings and heroes of Iran, countries, wars, manners and customs and other subjects can be gleaned from this as well as from other yashts. Most of them are to be met with in the Shâhnâmeh, the great epic of Iran. We content ourselves by giving a few names below :—

Avesta.	Persian.
Gaya Maretan ... ..	Gayomard.
Haoshyangha Paradhâta...	Hoshang Peshdâd.
Yima Khshæta ... ..	Jamshid.
Azhi Dahâka ... ..	Zohak.
Thrætaona ... ..	Faredun.
Keresâspa ... ..	Kersâsp.
Frangrasyân ... ..	Afrâsyâb.
Kavi usan ... ..	Kâus.
Kavi Husravah ... ..	Kaikhusro
Tusa ... ..	Tâs.
Vaeska's sons ... ..	{ Veseh's sons, viz. Pirân and Hûmân.
Jâmâspa ... ..	Jamasp.
Ashavazdah, the son of Pourudhâkhsti ; and Ashavazdah and Thrîta the sons of Sâyuzdri ... ..	.....
Vistauru ... ..	Gustaham.
Yoishta Fryâna ... ..	Goshte Fryân.
The Hvovas and the	
Naotaras ... ..	Sons of Habub and Nodar.
Zarathushtra ... ..	Zartosht.
Kavi Vishtâspa ... ..	Kae Gushtâsp.

Avesta.	Persian.
Zairivairi ... ..	Zarir.
Arejat-aspa and Vanda-remaini ... ..	Arjâsp and Andarimân.
Savanghavâcha ... ..	Shahrnâz
Erenavâcha ... ..	Arnavâz.
Airyu ... ..	Erach.
Gandarewa ... ..	Kandaru.
Keresavazda ... ..	Karsivaz.
Manushchithra ... ..	Minochihr.
Syâvarshâna ... ..	Syâvash.
Kavi Kavâta ... ..	Kaikobâd.
Hutaoshâ ... ..	Katâyun.
Aurvataspa ... ..	Lohrâsp.
Haoma ... ..	Hom.
Aghraêratha ... ..	Aghrerath.
Uzava Tumâspa ... ..	Zui-Tahmâsp.
Athwya ... ..	Abtin.
Takhma Urupa ... ..	Tehmuras.
Sâma ... ..	Sâm.
Naremanâo ... ..	Narimân.
Tûra ... ..	Tûr.
Sairima ... ..	Selem.
Spento-dâta ... ..	Isfandiar.

Avesta	Persian
Mâzana ... ..	Mâzandarân.
Hara-berezaiti ... ..	Alborz.
Bawri ... ..	Bâbul = Babylon.
Hankanê ... ..	{ Hang-i-Afrasiab = the cave of Afrasiab.
Chêchasta ... ..	Khanjast for chejast.
Khvâirizem ... ..	Khvârizm
Kangha ... ..	Kangdez.
etc.	etc.

Lately a new name was discovered in the last portion of this yasht by the writer of this essay. It is that of Hvâfritô who was the founder of a dynasty of kings of Persia called Hvâfritân in the Pahlavi Dinkard. This dynasty must have flourished *before* the Achæminian and *after* the kayanian times, for the name of its founder is found in the Avesta which, as is well known, were composed before the Achæminian period.

KHORSHED YASHT.—This yasht with a little variation is also known as the Khorshed Nyâesh. It contains a few praises of the sun. “And when



the sun rises up, then the earth made by Ahura becomes clean; the running waters become clean; the waters of the wells become clean; the waters of the sea become clean; the standing waters become clean; all the holy creatures, the creatures of the good spirit become clean. Should not the sun rise up, then the Daêvas (every kind of evil) would destroy all things that are in the seven karshvars (continents), nor would the heavenly Yazatas find any way of withstanding or repelling them in the material world.”\*

MEHER YASHT.—This is the longest of all yashts. It contains many invocations to Mithra who is said to preside over the heavenly light. The Meher-nyâesh principally consists of an invocation detached from this yasht. Light is truth and justice, and darkness untruth and injustice. Therefore the presiding genius of light, Mithra, is said to reward truth and punish falsehood. He is the Judge (latterly called ‘Meher Dâvar’) of the thoughts, words, and deeds of all men, both in this life as well as in the life to come. As a preserver of oaths and good faith, he chastises those who break their promises, the Mithradrujs. “The ruffian who lies unto Mithra brings death unto the

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\* Khorshed yasht, paras 2, 3

whole country injuring as much the faithful world as a hundred evil-doers could do. Break not the contract, O Spitama, neither the one that thou hadst entered into with one of the unfaithful nor the one that thou hadst entered into with one of the faithful who is one of thy own faith. For Mithra stands for both, the faithful and the unfaithful." "The man without glory ( the man of little faith ), led astray from the right way, grieves in his heart ; the man without glory ( the man of little faith ) thinks thus in himself : ' That careless Mithra does not see all the evil that is done, nor all the lies that are told. But I think thus in my heart : Should the evil thoughts of the earthly man be a hundred times worse, they would not rise so high as the good thoughts of the heavenly Mithra ; should the evil words of the earthly man be a hundred times worse, they would not rise so high as the good words of the heavenly Mithra ; should the evil deeds of the earthly man be a hundred times worse, they would not rise so high as the good deeds of the heavenly Mithra ; should the heavenly wisdom in the earthly man be a hundred times greater, it would not rise so high as the heavenly wisdom in the heavenly Mithra ; and thus, should the ears of the earthly man hear a hundred times better, he would not hear so well as the heavenly Mithra, whose ear hears well, who has a

thousand senses, and sees every man that tells a lie.”\*

FARVARDIN YASHT.—This Yasht is composed in praise of Fravashis. Fravashi is commonly translated as a spirit or a guardian angel. But it really means a peculiar inner power of the soul conceived to be in every being and helping to constitute it as such, and it is conceived as an invisible spirit. Zoroastrianism never honouring anything evil, the Fravashis of the good and holy beings only are spoken of. This Yasht is dedicated to them. Not only men but heavenly beings and even physical objects like the sky, the earth, etc. are said to have each a Fravashi.

This Yasht may be divided into two parts : the former consisting of praise and glorification of the Fravashis of the good in general, the latter of an enumeration of the Fravashis of the most celebrated Iranian personages from Gaya Maretan (Gayomard) to Saoshyâns at the end of the world. Seven chapters of this yasht (80-145) are devoted to the registering of their names with some of which a short description of their peculiar deeds is given. They are the following:—

- (1) Names of certain heavenly beings of the first man Gaya Maretan, the prophet Zarathushtra Spitama, and his first disciple Maidhyomâongha ; (2) Other

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\* Meher Yasht, paras 2, 105-107

disciples of Zarathushtra ; (3) Certain other men ; (4) Holy men of other countries ; (5) The last Saoshyâns ; (6) Holy men before the time of Zarathushtra ; (7) Certain holy women.

BEHRAM YASHT.—Behrâm is believed to preside over Victory. This yasht is written in his praise and glorification.

DÎN YASHT.—This yasht is dedicated to the religion of Mazdaworship as personified, who has a companion called 'Chistâ' *i. e.*, religious knowledge. Zarathushtra having most to do with religion, only something about him and his wife and âthravans, *i. e.*, priests, is spoken of in this yasht: "To whom Zarathushtra did sacrifice saying: 'Rise up from thy seat, come forward from the abode, thou most right Chistâ, made by Mazda and holy. If thou art before me, stay for me ; if thou art behind me, overtake me. Let them all be friendly so that the roads may be as safe as one's own house, the mountains may be with good pathways, the forests may be safely passable, and the rivers happily fordable ; (all this) for our purity, for the teaching of (Ahura Mazda), for the proclaiming (of mine to mankind) and also for believing (them by mankind).'"\*

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\* Dîn Yasht, paras 2, 3

ASHI YASHT OR ASHISHVANG YASHT.—Ashi or Arti is a feminine impersonation of prosperity of the body, mind, and social and civil life, if it is acquired as a reward for holy deeds. She is figuratively called a daughter of Ahura Mazda. In this yasht it is intended to inculcate the precept of Zoroastrianism that it is not ignoble to acquire fortune and wealth, provided it is done by lawful means and is spent in praiseworthy deeds, as many ancient Iranian heroes including Zarathushtra himself did. It is also taught in this yasht that sinful acts especially unchastity, prostitution, abortion, war, plunder, and rapine, cause destruction of all sorts of lawful prosperity, and they are, therefore, to be annihilated from the world. “The first wailing of the great Ashi Vanguhi is her wailing about the courtesan who destroys her fruit : ‘Stand thou not near her, sit thou not on her bed !’—‘What shall I do ? Shall I go back to the heavens ? Shall I sink into the earth ?’ The second wailing of the great Ashi Vanguhi is her wailing about the unchaste wife who brings forth a child conceived of a stranger and presents it to her husband : ‘What shall I do ? Shall I go back to the heavens ? Shall I sink into the earth ?’ This is the third wailing of the great Ashi Vanguhi : ‘This is the worst deed that men and tyrants do, namely, when they prevent maids from marrying and bringing forth

children. What shall I do ? Shall I go back to the heavens ? Shall I sink into the earth ? ” \*

ZAMYAD YASHT.—This yasht is composed in praise of the productive earth with special reference to ancient Iranian mountainous countries as the birthplace and scene of the exploits of so many renowned personages from Ahura Mazda down to the last Saoshyant, all of whom possessed ‘ khvarenô,’ *i.e.*, extraordinary halo of glory. A hope and belief is expressed in this yasht that as the collective result of the actions of this khvarenô, the world will at last be freed from disease and premature death. “ So that they may restore the world, which will (thenceforth) no more grow old and never die premature, never decaying and never rotting, ever living and ever increasing, and master of its wish ; when the dead will rise, when life and immortality will come, and the world will be restored at the wish (of God) ; when the creation will grow deathless,—the prosperous creation of the Good Spirit,—and the Druj (destruction) shall perish, though she may rush on every side to kill the holy beings, she and her hundredfold brood shall perish, as it is the will of the Lord.” In the line “ Yat irista paiti usehishtân,” “ when the dead will rise up,” is the germ of the idea of and belief in Ristâkhêz, *i.e.*, the

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\* Ashi Yasht, Paras 57, 58, 59

Resurrection of the dead. This idea has been very much amplified in some of the later Pahlavi books. And it is most probable that it was from this yasht the idea found its way in other religious systems of the civilized world, notably of the Jews, Christians, and Muhammedans.

The Afrigâns are (1) the *Afrigân-e-Gâhâmbâr*, which is a brief description of the six seasonal feasts, together with the duties to be performed on those occasions; (2) the *Afrigân-e Gâthâ* which is a brief chapter taken from the 'Farwardin Yasht' (49-52), treating of the action of the Fravashis, *i.e.*, a class of guardian spirits, on that occasion, and consequently recited only during the five intercalary days at the end of each Zoroastrian year; (3) the *Afrigân-e-Rapithvan*, a brief composition to be recited on the *Jamshedî Navroz* day (Vernal Equinox) and the *Jashan-e-Rapithvan* in honour of the advent of spring and the warm season in the northern hemisphere: (4) the *Afrigân-e-Ardâfarvash*, a composition to be recited in honour of fravashis as mentioned above in the 'Afrigân-e-Gâthâ,' but with this difference, that while the Afrigân-e-gâthâ is to be recited only during the last five intercalary days, this may be recited throughout the year: (5) the *Afrigân-e-Dahmân*, *i.e.* the blessings to be recited for the welfare of the house, or the family, of the sacrificer; (6) the *Afrigân-*

*e-Sarosh*, i.e., the first three chapters taken from the Sarosh Yasht (2-8) to be recited in praise of 'Sarosh' i.e. devotion personified.

The *Gâhân-Sarâyeshti* is the recitation of Gâthâs before carrying dead bodies to the Tower of Silence. Now-a-days only the seven chapters of the Gâthâ Ahunavaiti (Yasna XXVIII-XXXIV) are recited on that occasion.

The *Sîrozâh*, i.e. the formulæ or the inventory of the names of thirty days of the month, each day being regarded as especially presided over by a certain invisible heavenly being.

The *Sarosh Bâj*, a piece of prayer invoking Sarosh above-mentioned.

There are a few more pieces called *Nirangs*.

### C.

Of the Pâzend pieces some are worth noticing.

The *Patêts*, i.e., penitentiary prayers. The Pâzend pieces. They are five: (1) The *Patêt-e-Pashêmâni* or *Patêt-e-Adarbâd*; (2) the *Patêt-e-Ravâni*; (3) the *Patêt-e-Irânî*, (4) the *Patêt-e-Irânî-e-Ravâni*; (5) the *Khûd Patêt*. Most of the offences enumerated in these interesting pieces seem to have been known in the Avestaic times.



*Afrîns*, i. e. blessings to be accompanied with Afrigans. They are : (1) *Afrîn-e-Gahambâr*, (2) *Afrîn-e-Rapithvan*, (3) *Afrîn-e-Ardâfarvash*, (4) *Afrîn-e-Dahmân*, etc.

*Pémâni-Pahlavi*, i. e. the formulæ and blessings to be recited at the ceremony of marriage, wherein solemn promises of lifelong love and fidelity are taken from the bride and the bridegroom with the consent of their relations and friends in the presence of an assembly of men and women.

The *Sitâyeshes*, i. e. the praises of the thirty Yazatas believed to preside over thirty days of the month.

Miscellaneous *Bajs*, *Nirangs*, etc.

Next in importance to the sacred pieces of the Avestâ and Pâzend are the Pahlavi-

The Pahlavi-Pâzend Pâzend books of the Parsis. Some of the more important among them are : (1) the Pahlavi translations of the Vendidad, Yasna, Visparad, and some parts of the Khordeh-Avesta ; (2) the Dînkard ; (3) the Dâdistân-e-Dînî ; (4) the Bundeheshne ; (5) the Book of Ardâi Virâf ; (6) the Shâyasht-Lâshâyasht ; (7) the Mâdigân-e-gosht-Fariân ; (8) the Sîkand-i-Gumânî Vijâr ; (9) the Nîrangistân ; (10) the Andarj-e-Adarbâd ; (11) the Andarj-e-Buzorg Meher ; (12) Mainyo-i-Khard ;

(13) Zand-i-Bahman Yasht; and a few others. Though the elucidations and explanations of several of the doctrines and tenets of the Zoroastrian religion contained in these Pahlavi-Pâzend books may not be quite satisfactory or convincing to the critical student, it may be safely affirmed that these books are useful exponents of the Zoroastrian ideas of the middle ages.

The disastrous fall of the Persian Empire at the hands of the Arabs seems to have been the principal cause of a considerable admixture of foreign ideas and practices with those of the original Zoroastrian creed. These are met with in books of Persian Sûphies, the Sipâsees, and other theosophic and mystic Persian writers. The *Dasâtîr*, the *Dabestân*, the *Zardasht-e-Afsâr*, the *Jâm-e-Kaikhushro*, the *Shâristan-i-charchaman* and such other books fall under this category. They are not in any sense expositions of the Zoroastrian doctrines, but are mainly a mixture of the ideas and observances of different creeds including Zoroastrianism, Hinduism, Buddhism, the doctrines of the Sabians, Jews and others. These books are not regarded as having any portion of the genuine literature of Zoroastrianism.

But there are other Zoroastrian books written in Modern Persian mostly during the last five centuries,

Books on Zoroastrianism written in modern Persian.

such as the *Sad-dar*, the *Zartosht Námeh*, the collections of religious epistolary correspondence between the Parsis of India and those of Persia, called the *Raváyats*, etc., etc. Their writers are simple-minded staunch orthodox priests and laymen whose minds were not sophisticated like those of the Sipâsees and other imaginative Parsis by Sabian and other mystic fancies. The *Raváyets* deal but sparingly with philosophical, ethical, and kindred themes, but they may be relied upon in traditional matters of ritual and customs.

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## D

### A FEW MORE PASSAGES ABOUT AHURA MAZDA

Ahura Mazda says : " My name is Stable (permanent), O holy Zarathushtra ! My second name is the Gatherer ( of the particles of substance). My third name is the Producer of all attractions. My fourth name is Perfect Order. My fifth name is all good things created by Mazda, the offspring of the Holy Order. My sixth name is Understanding. My seventh name is the One with understanding. My eighth name is Knowledge. My ninth name is the One with knowledge. My tenth name is Memory. My eleventh

name is the Rememberer. My twelfth name is Ahura the life-giving. My thirteenth name is the greatest Giver of strength. My fourteenth name is He in whom there is no harm. My fifteenth name is the Invincible. My sixteenth name is the Judge of all deeds. My seventeenth name is Omnipresent. My eighteenth name is the Healer. My nineteenth name is the Regulator. My twentieth name is Mazda (the All-knowing one)."

"I am the Keeper ; I am the Creator and the Maintainer ; I am the Discerner ; I am the Most Beneficent Spirit. My name is the Bestower of health, my name is the Best Bestower of health. My name is the Athravan (the Priest) ; my name is the most Athravanlike of all Athravans. My name is Ahura (the Lord). My name is Mazdâo (the All-knowing). My name is the Holy ; my name is the Most Holy. My name is the Glorious ; my name is the Most Glorious. My name is the Full-seeing ; my name is the Fullest-seeing. My name is the Far seeing ; my name is the Farthest-seeing. My name is Looker on ; my name is the Traverser ; my name is the Creator ; my name is the Protector ; my name is the Maintainer. My name is the Discerner. My name is the Most Discerner. My name is the Producer of Prosperity ; my name is the Word of Prosperity. My name is the King who rules at his

will ; my name is the King who rules most at his will. My name is the Famous King ; my name is the Most Famous King. My name is He who does not deceive ; my name is He who is not deceived. My name is the Keeper of the good ; my name is He who destroys malice ; my name is He who conquers at once ; my name is He who conquers everything ; my name is He who has shaped everything. My name is All-weal ; my name is Full-weal ; my name is the Master of weal. My name is He who works purification ; my name is He who works beneficence. My name is the Beneficent One ; my name is the Powerful One ; my name is the Most Powerful. My name is Holiness ; my name is the Sublime One ; my name is the Good Sovereign ; my name is the Best of sovereigns. My name is the Master ; my name is the Greatest Master ; my name is He who is free from sorrow."

"Know thou thus and how it is, O Holy Zarathushtra! by my understanding and by my knowledge ; *viz.*, how the world first began and how it will end." "Here I take as Lord and Master, the Greatest of all, Ahuramazda." (Hormazd yasht, 7-8, 12-15, 26, 32.)

"O Ahura Mazda, most Beneficent Spirit, maker of the material world, Thou Holy one."\*

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\* Vendidad, Fargard II, 1.

"I, Ahura Mazda, the maker of all good things..."\*

"I, Ahura Mazda, brought it (water) down with mighty vigour, for the increase of the house, of the borough, of the country, to keep them, to keep and maintain them in safety." †

"Ahura Mazda, the Creator, the radiant and glorious, the greatest and best, the most excellent (to our conceptions), the most stern in justice, the wisest, and the one whose form is the most perfect, who attains His ends most infallibly, because of His righteous Order, who produces good creation, who sends His joy-creating grace afar ; who made us and has fashioned us and who has nourished and protected us, and who is the most bounteous Spirit." ‡

"Thus therefore do we worship Ahura Mazda, who made the animal food and the grain food, and the waters and the wholesome plants, the lights, and the earth and all (existing) objects that are good. Yea, we worship Him for His sovereign power and His greatness and his skilful works....." "And we worship Him under His name as Wise Lord, the Most Beneficent. We worship Him with our bones, and with our flesh, (with our bodies and our life)." §

\* Vendidad, Fargard XXII, 1.

† Yasna I, 1.

‡ Abân Yasht, 6.

§ Yasna XXXVII, 1-3.

“In the name of God. I praise and invoke (Thee) the Creator Ormuzd, the Brilliant, Majestic, Omniscient, the Perfecter of deeds, the Lord of Lords, the King over all kings, the Protector, the Creator of the created, the Giver of daily maintenance, the Powerful, Strong, Old, Forgiving, Granter of forgiveness, Rich in love, Mighty and Wise, the pure Supporter. May Thy right rule be everlasting!”\*

“In the name of God, the Merciful, Forgiver, Rich in love. Praise be to the name of Ormuzd, the God with the name “who always was, is, and always will be.—His name is the Deity who is the Beneficent Spirit, the Heavenly amongst the Heavenly. His one proper name is Ormuzd, the Greatest Ruler, Mighty, Wise, Creator, Supporter, Refuge, Defender, Completer of good works, Merciful, Pure, Good and Just and Full of all strength.

“I give thanks to the Great among beings, who created through his own determination of time, strength, and wisdom, the high six Amshaspands and the many Yazats, the shining Paradise Garôthmân, the Vault of the Heaven, the shining Sun, the brilliant Moon, the numerous Stars, the wind, the firmament, the water, the fire, the earth, the trees, the cattle, the metals and

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\* Khurshed Nyâesh, 1.

mankind.

“Offering and praise be to that Lord, the Completer of good works, who made men greater than all earthly beings through the gift of speech and gave them reason to rule the times, to govern the creatures and to war against and abstain from the daêvas.

“I bow to the Omniscience of God, who hath sent through the holy Zarathushtra Spitama with holy spirit the message to mankind, the wisdom of Religion and the bright inborn wisdom and wisdom to be acquired by hearing (learning), and knowledge for the guidance of all beings who were, are, and will be, (and) the wisdom of the Mâthra-spenta, so that the soul may be saved from hell at the bridge (ehinvat) and may pass to that paradise of the holy which is bright, brilliant, sweet-smelling, and full of all goodness.....

“Praise be to the merciful Lord, who desires good deeds, and rewards those who act according to his commands and (at last) will purify (even) the wicked out of hell and will beautify all with purity.”\*



## E

## A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF SPIRITUAL BEINGS

Angels in the Avesta are divided into two groups : (1) the Amêshâspentâs or Amshâspands, the archangels, and (2) the Yazatas or angels. The latter may for purposes of comparison be subdivided into (*a*) those who resemble the divinities of the Vedas and other nations of antiquity, and (*b*) those who are purely Iranian.

THE AMESHASPENTAS OR ARCHANGELS.—The Ameshâspentâs, or Amshâspands, are believed to preside over the following natural objects, *viz.*, Ahuramazda over mankind, Vohumanô over cattle, Ashavahishta over fire, Khshathravairya over metals, Spentâ-ârmaiti over the earth, Haurvatât over water and Ameretât over plants. As already explained, these seven peculiar appellatives are originally found in the Gâthâs, but in course of time they came to be conceived as the archangels.

YAZATAS, WHO RESEMBLE THE DIVINITIES OF THE VEDAS AND OTHER NATIONS OF ANTIQUITY.—Of the yazatas those that are connected with natural objects may be again subdivided into the five groups according to the four elements—fire and light, water, air, and earth,—and some other objects.

THE FIRE YAZATA.—Atar, *i.e.*, fire, being the cause of heat and light and the source of life and growth, acquired very great importance among the ancient Iranians. The yazata presiding over fire was also called Atar. Very great homage was paid to both, so much so that no important religious ceremony could be performed without fire. Many panegyrics on its beneficial qualities were written and sung. In the time of the Avesta several kinds of fire were known and had received appropriate names, such as lightning (*vâzishta*) which appeared in the sky, the animal heat (*vohufryâna*) which consumed food and water, the heat of the vegetable life (*urvâzishta*) which was seen to absorb only water, and so on. Fire is figuratively called in the Avesta 'the son of Ahura Mazda' and an analogous expression is found in the old Sanskrit. In the Vedas lightning is spoken of as the 'son of the Asura Varuna.' Lightning is also termed Atharvan which means having Athar *i.e.*, fire. From this Athar (Av. 'Atar') were derived in Sanskrit 'Athari' (flame) and 'Atharyu' (flaming, blazing). In old Greek 'Athrageni' literally 'what gives birth to Athar' is the name of a plant, the dry stems of which were used to strike fire by friction. These circumstances tend to show that homage for fire among the Iranians was a peculiarity of theirs common with other Aryan nations

and had come down to them from a very remote antiquity. No wonder that in the cold and inclement climate of Iran fire played a very important part in their social and domestic economy, and was regarded as a special object of deep homage as a friend of man, presiding on his hearth, assisting in his labours, dispelling darkness of night and bestowing warmth in the cold and dreary winter. By a pretty poetic conception suggestive of its high utility and purity, the ancient Iranians, like their Vedic brethren, spoke of the fire with its towering flames as the messenger from this nether world of mortals to the high throne of God, and thus established him as a symbol of worship. And this ardent veneration marked the complete treatment of fire by the Iranians at all times. Hence it is that we find the great king Darius Hystaspes represented on the rock of Naksh-i-Rustam facing the fire while engaged in praying to Ahura Mazda, and the coins of all monarchs of the Sassanian Dynasty bore the impression of a fire-altar guarded on each side by the king and probably the high priest respectively.

YAZATAS OF THE LIGHTS OF HEAVEN.—The ancient Iranians recognized seven yazatas as connected with the lights of heaven. They were (1) 'Ushâ,' the yazata of the morning twilight; (2) 'Hvare,' the sun

yazata ; (3) 'Mithra,' the yazata precursor of the broad daylight ; (4) 'Mâh,' the moon yazata ; (5) the star 'Tishtrya' as the rain yazata ; (6) 'Asman,' the sky yazata ; and (7) 'Anêran,' the yazata of the pointless lights of heaven.

Ushâ or ushâh (Vedic ushâ or ushas) is the name both of the morning twilight and the yazata presiding over it. The word 'ushâ bâmyâ' (Pâzend, Hoshbâm) *i.e.*, the brilliant morning twilight, is in the feminine gender. Its yazata, therefore, was conceived to be of the same gender and described as a beautiful maiden driving in a splendid chariot and awakening men and animals to engage themselves for employment in their work.

'Hvare' is the name of the yazata presiding over the sun (Skr. 'sûrya,' Gr. 'Helios,' L. 'Sol,' etc). In the Avesta much importance is attached to the sun. Some of the beneficial effects of his heat and light are recognized. In the 'khurshed nyâcsh' expression is given to the sentiment, which modern science has so fully confirmed, that the sun is the source of light and life, and growth for all the creations, and the purifier of all waters, and that without his genial light and warmth creations would perish. The sun, like the fire, is regarded as a symbol of Divinity and as such an object of reverence. Of the five daily prayers

enjoined on every Zoroastrian, three must be offered facing the sun, *viz.*, in the east at the rising morning, in the south at the culminating noon, and in the west to the setting sun. Zoroaster says in his Gâthâs : “(If not Thou, O Ahura Mazda,) who makes morning, noon, and sunset which seem to remind Thy devotees of their duty to offer prayers?” (Yasna XLIV. 5.) It is easy to discover in the five daily prayers of Zoroastrians a striking resemblance to the similar prayers of Moslems, and in the three referred during the day time a resemblance to the ‘trikâlasandhyâ’ of the Brahmins. The same regard for these elements and concentration of the mind intent on devotion is evidenced by the injunction that the untying and retying of the kusti (*i. e.*, the sacred woollen thread band wound round the waist by every Zoroastrian) must be performed with the face towards the sun in the day time and the moon, the fire or other light at night.

In the Gâthâs of the prophet Zarathushtra the sun is spoken of as a creation of Ahura Mazda, as also in many places in the later writings, *viz.*, Avesta, Pâzend, or Pahlavi. “Who, if not Thou, O Ahura Mazda, has fixed the path of the sun and the stars,” (Yasna XLIV. 3) says Zoroaster. But it seems that in the time of the later Avesta, a doctrine somewhat similar to that of the Brahminical doctrine, representing certain

grand natural objects as visible forms of God, prevailed. For we find in the Haptanghâiti (Yasna XXXVI, 6) as follows :—

“Of all Thy figures, O Ahura Mazda, we acknowledge as the best form, the highest of the high, amongst these lights, *viz.*, that which is called the sun.”

When we consider the supreme importance of the sun in relation to the world around us, there is no wonder that the ancient Iranians regarded it as one of the visible forms of Divinity.

Accordingly we find that many of the important festivals of the Zoroastrian religion are based upon the sun's course on the line of the tropics, and the religious year commences with the point at which the sun crosses the line of the equator, Vernal Equinox, which is a festival called the Jamshedî Navroz.

Mithra is the name of the yazata presiding over the light of heaven. He is the precursor of the sun. Many and long are the praises sung of him. As the lord of light with ten thousand eyes everything physical and moral in the world is revealed to him. He is the same as the Vedic ‘Mitra,’ the god of the day and the frequent associate of ‘Varuna.’ The name ‘Mithra’ was afterwards pronounced ‘Mihir’ in later Iranian languages, and by a confusion of ideas it became identified with the sun, which came to be called

'Mihir' in modern Persian. His worship mixed with certain rites of the ancient Babylonians had spread far and wide at the time of the advent of Christianity. A feast called 'Mehergân' in his honour is still observed among Zoroastrians.

Mâh or the moon is also the name of the yazata presiding over that luminary. In the Gâthâs it is said : " Who, if not Thou, O Mazda, causes the moon to wax and wane ? " (Yasna XLIV. 3). From this it is clear that Zoroaster believes the moon to be one of the creations of the Almighty. In the later Avesta we find comparatively very little about this yazata. It is so probably because this serene luminary of the night did not strike the Iranians as exercising the same degree of beneficial influence as the sun. In the poetical imagination of the Avestaic people, while the sun was pictured as driving in a chariot of swift horses (aurvataspa), the moon was only depicted as " of the seed of the cow " or " cow-faced " (gaochithra). One of the virtues of the moon is spoken of in the 'Mâh nyâesh' (4) as follows :—

" When the light of the moon shines brightly, through its cool moisture the green of the green-coloured plants developes from the earth."

According to the later Avesta 'Tishtrya' is the name of a star as well as of the yazata presiding over it.

He is considered as the chief of stars, and is generally believed to be 'Sirius.' The name 'Tishtrya' is probably comparable to Sanskrit 'Tishya' which is a constellation consisting of three stars. The fall of rain after a drought is ascribed to him.

'Asman' is the name both of the sky and the yazata presiding over it. As overshadowing all creation and holding all the celestial lights he came in later times to be regarded as a yazata, but there is no yasht or nyâesh specially composed for him.

'Anaghra Raohâo,' *i.e.*, endless or pointless lights, is a collective name for all those celestial lights, so many and so close to each other as to form an unbroken sheet of light so that no particular star could be discerned out separately except those which are particularly named. They are considered collectively as a yazata.

THE WATER YAZATA.—'Apô,' *i.e.*, Waters, or collectively 'Ardvisûra, Anâhita,' *i.e.* the wet powerful undefiled (element of water), is also the name of the yazata presiding over water. These names come down in later languages in the form of 'Abân or Avân Ardûisûr.' In the Gâthâs of Zoroaster waters were only said to be a creation of Ahura Mazda. "Who (but Thee, created, O Ahura Mazda) waters and trees?" asks Zoroaster, (Yasna XLIV-4). But in the later Avesta many high



praises of this yazata have been sung. The words 'âp' and 'Ardvi' being grammatically of the feminine gender, this deity was conceived to be of the gentler sex. The abode of waters was conceived in later times to be in the heaven, and their descent from heaven was poetically pictured as the coming down of the fair maidens and daughters of 'Ahura,' the Lord. They were consequently called by the Avestaic people 'Ahurânî' (Vedic 'Asurânî'). Long are the descriptions of the benefits conferred by them upon mankind. No wonder that the refreshing, fertilizing, and otherwise beneficent influence of pure water inspired in the minds of the ancient Iranians as in those of the Vedic, Babylonian, and other nations of antiquity a very exalted idea of its greatness, leading it to be ranked as a divinity. For we find waters called in the Vedas 'Apô-dêvî,' and in the Avesta 'Apô Vanguhîsh.' Moreover, as they are called 'Asûrânî' in the Vedas and 'Ahurânî' in the Avesta from 'Asura' and 'Ahura' the Lord, the goddess of waters was called 'Mylitta' by the Babylonians from 'Mul,' Arabic 'Maula,' the Lord, and 'Alitta' or 'Alilat' by the ancient Arabs from the Semetic root 'Al,' God, with the feminine suffix 't' or 'ta.' Again the word 'Anâhîtâ' (pure or undefiled) passed into the western nations in the form of 'Anâitis,' and was applied to 'Venus as being purely brilliant.'

In still later times the same word was also applied to Venus in Persia in the form of modern Persian 'Nâhid.'

THE AIR YAZATA.—Vayu (Skr. Vāyu) is the name both of atmosphere as well as of the yazata presiding over it. When the air is still and calm its yazata is honoured in the Avesta with this name. In later languages he is also called 'Vâe-vêh' *i.e.*, good atmosphere. Similarly Vâta (Skr. Vâta) *i.e.*, wind, is the name both of the air in motion as well as the yazata presiding over it. But when the air assumes the form of tempest or injures man in any shape, it is considered as the work of a demon, called in later languages Vâe Vatar, *i.e.*, evil air.

THE EARTH YAZATA.—The Earth has two names in the Avesta : (1) Spentâ-ârmaiti for cultivable land and (2) Zemhudâo. The first is one of the names of the Ameshâ-spentâs, and the second is the name both of the earth as well as of its yazata. The Ameshâspand and the yazata are considered as presiding one on the cultivable fields and the other on the earth.

'HAOMA' OR THE YAZATA OF A SACRED DRINK.—Haoma (Skr. Soma) is the name both of a plant and its juice said to be very health-giving as well as of the yazata presiding over it. The Vedic Aryas as well as the ancient Iranians used to extract the juice of this

plant as an offering. Nothing of this plant or the drinking of its juice appears in Zoroaster's own Gâthâs, though in the later Avesta his name is sometimes connected with that drink. Even at the present day the Parsi priests following the old custom prepare during their yasna ceremony a drink from the dry twigs of a plant of that name brought from Persia, probably because the fresh and the living plant was not available in India.

BEHRAM OR THE YAZATA OF VICTORY.—‘Verethraghna’ (Vedic ‘Vritrahan’) literally means the defeater of the enemy. In the Vedas it is the name of Indra, but in the Avesta it signifies only Victorious, ‘Verethraghna’ became corrupted into Pahlavi as ‘Varharân’ and subsequently into modern Persian as ‘Behrâm.’ He is the yazata presiding over victory. A long yasht composed in his praise is now extant.

APAM-NAPAT YAZATA.—‘Apām-Napât’ (Vedic Apām Napât) literally means the grandson of waters. It is a name of a kind of fire, arising out of humidity, out of clouds, probably that of the lightning. In the Vedas he is regarded as a dēva, in the Avesta as a yazata.

AIRYAMAN YAZATA.—‘Airyaman’ (Vedic Aryaman) is invoked both by the Brahmins and Parsis in their Marriage ceremony. He is, as the name suggests,

the presiding genius of the Aryan hearth and home. And as the sun and the fire were revered in every Aryan house with an attendant sacrifice, Airyaman is regarded by some as the deity of fire or sun or sacrifice. Wedding or conjugal unity being the foundation of a peaceful settled life, the invocation of Airyaman in the marriage ceremony explains itself.

YAZATAS WHO ARE PURELY IRANIAN.—There are other yazatas which bear no connection whatsoever with the Vedic devas, but are of purely Iranian origin most probably arisen after the separation.

GOSH YAZATA.—In the figurative language of the Avesta, specially of the Gâthâs, the whole living creation, possessing soul and form and benefitting mankind in various ways, was called Gao, *i.e.*, the Cow. It was believed to be created by the Wisdom of Ahura Mazda. Zoroaster says in his Gâthâs: "With Thee was the Wisdom, the creator of the Cow." \* In the later Avesta, however, this creation as well as the creative Wisdom and skill of God become personified as a yazata known by the name of "Gosh" yazata. A yasht of this yazata is now extant.

SAROSH YAZATA.—Saraosha means obedience and devotion to the divine law, and in the Gâthâs of Zoroas-

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\* Yasna XXXI, 9.

ter we find the word employed only in this sense. But in the later Avesta, this pious and religious disposition became personified and came to be regarded as a yazata. This yazata is highly extolled and much venerated in most of the writings subsequent to the Gáthâs. In modern Persian 'Sarosh' is the name corresponding to the angel 'Gabriel.'

RASHNU AND ARSHTAT YAZATAS.—'Rashnu' and 'Arshtât' both are derived from a root 'orez' meaning 'to be erect, to be right.' These being personified became known as two yazatas presiding over rectitude and justice.

DIN YAZATA.—'Daôna Mâzdayasnish' means both the religion worshipping Mazda and the yazata presiding over it. This word is in the feminine gender and the yazata, therefore, is also conceived as a female. Naturally this religion is highly extolled in the Gáthâs, in the later Avesta, and many other subsequent writings. And hence a special yasht was composed in praise of the yazata presiding over this religion, which is now extant.

ASHISHVANG YAZATA.—'Ashi-vanguhi' originally meant good orderliness leading to prosperity as the reward of good deeds. In course of time it came to mean the yazata presiding over it. The word being in the feminine gender, the yazata is also regarded as a

female. A yasht'in praise of this angel exists.

MARESPAND YAZATA.—‘Māthra-spenta’ means both the holy beneficent spells or formulæ as well as the yazata presiding over them. In the Zoroastrian Gāthās the word had only the former meaning. But in the later Avesta and in many other subsequent writings, it bore the later signification as well.

These are the well known angels exclusively Zoroastrian. Besides these there are many more considered as the Hamkârs or co-workers with one or other of these. Ahura Mazda, Ameshâspentas, and the Hamkârs constitute a hierarchy. These with the exception of Ahura Mazda have been recognized from remote times by Parsis as angels under the supremacy of Ahura Mazda. ‘The thirty-three angels’ (though an inaccurate expression, because Ahura Mazda is included in the number) is a common phrase among them. A similar expression is also to be met with in the Vedic writings where the ‘thirty-three’ are spoken of as “three times eleven or thirty-three devas.” The idea of angels working as the servants and messengers of God which is met with among the Jews, Christians, and Muhammedans, had its origin in this hierarchy of Zoroastrian religion. “Maimonides says that the Jews ‘derived all their knowledge of the angels from

Persians at the captivity,' and truly a perusal of the Zend-Avesta affords the best explanation of that mass of ideas concerning good and evil spirits, current so long in Christendom, and yet supported by such slender authorization from the canonical writings of either Testament."\*

Later on with the pre-Zoroastrian ideas of deities presiding over natural objects, the old Aryan ideas of ancestor-worship revived. It was as the result of this conception that next to the yazatas, the adoration of Urvânô (souls) and Fravashis (the spirits) of good and holy persons was established. 'Urvan' means simply the soul, but Fravashi is the soul's peculiar power, figuratively conceived as its consort, which constituting its personality enables it to distinguish itself from all other beings, especially by performing certain noteworthy great and good deeds, mostly those of vanquishing the evil and preserving the good in the world. This peculiar power of every being was believed to be (like the Yazatas) a spiritual being distinct from the soul. Not only men but all animals, nay even the sky, water, earth, fire, and

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\* Studies New and Old of Ethical and Social Subjects, by Frances Power Cobbe, p. 91.

heavenly beings are considered as having each a Fravashi. The word 'Urvan' is masculine, and the word 'Fravashi' is feminine. Hence in course of time they came to be regarded by a confusion of ideas as a sort of inseparable twins, and also as Fravashi merging into "urvan" and forming two names of the soul singly. As the spirit of Zoroastrianism discards everything evil, only the Urvans and the Fravashis of the good are honoured and praised. Before the birth of every holy being his or her Fravashi, not having had to do its own proper work ordained by God, is believed to be waiting to be united with that being, and therefore employed in the meantime in protecting the creations of Ahura Mazda. Hence the "Fravashis of the holy" are respected as guardian spirits of the world. They are highly praised in the Avesta and their blessings and help are esteemed as most effectual. Ten days at the end of the year, called "Farvardegân" are assigned as "the feast of the Fravashis of the holy."

It appears from the later Avesta and other writings that not only invisible beings such as the homage to certain good Ahura Mazda, Ameshâspentas, Yazatas, objects of nature. Urvânô and Fravashis, but visible creations also which are believed to be presided over by them, are honoured and venerated. Hence it seems



that in later times the old Aryan worship of natural objects such as the earth, the waters, the mountains, the sun, the moon, the stars, the fire, the cows and bulls, etc. came into vogue. This was carried so far that even philosophical and scientific notions such as space, time, and others were included among them. In consequence of this the pure philosophical and monotheistic Mazdayasni religion taught by Zoroaster in his Gáthás received in course of time a supplementing admixture of the adoration of various holy beings and natural objects, more or less as a twin brother of the Vedic worship, but always as second only and subordinate to the worship of Ahura Mazda.

As the study of natural objects and regard for  
 Demonology. moral qualities gave rise in post-Gáthic time to a belief in several Amesháspentás, Yazatas, Urvans, Fravashis, etc., so it created by their side and in opposition to them several imaginary evil beings such as the Daévas, the Drujs, the Yátus, the Pairikás, etc. supposed to be the authors of various kinds of evil both physical and moral.

As Ahura Mazda was the head of all that is good and beneficial in the world of matter around, so Angromainyush (Ahriman) was looked upon as the chief of all that is evil, the Spirit of darkness and malice, of crime, sin, and ugliness.

As time went on, and this sort of dualism grew more and more established in the minds of the later Iranians, different kinds of evil assumed the shape of subordinates of Angromainyush and were classified under different heads.

As the hostility and breach between the Iranians and other Aryan and Un-Âryan nations widened, the gods of the non-Iranic countries came to be regarded as presiding over the different species of physical and moral evil and were objects of hatred to the Iranians as the emissaries of hell. Certain holy words of the Gâthâs and other scriptures were considered as efficacious spells for their exorcism. The Vedic gods Indra, Sarva, Nâsatya, and others were openly denounced in the Avesta. So were the Daêvas whose worship was prevalent in Mâzendarân, Varena, etc.

The female demons are generally called 'Drujs.' The word is derived from the root 'druj' (Skr. druh) to injure. Latterly in Persian, it obtained the restricted meaning of lying. Of the most pernicious Drujs one is Druj-e-Nasush, *i. e.*, the germs of all kinds of diseases arising from dead and decomposing matter. Of this kind there is also 'Bûshyâsta,' *i. e.*, the demon of sloth and procrastination, 'Tarômaiti,' *i. e.*, the demon of pride and arrogance, opposite of Aramaiti, etc.

The deadly and destructive winter was called

'Druj-e-Zimestân,' who caused the devastation of vegetable and animal life. There was Apaosha, the demon of drought, who was supposed to keep away the rains until vanquished by 'Tishtrya.'

The 'Yâtus' and the 'Pairikâs' were other classes of evil workers under the realm of Angromainyush, the former male and the latter female. Yâtus (Persian 'Jâdû') were the sorcerers, and Pairikâs (Persian 'Parî') were the witches. They were hated because they were believed to practise the black art.

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## F

The following considerations prove the falsity of regarding Ahriman as the opponent of Ahura Mazda.

- (1) "Through Beneficent Mind, owing to (our)  
 best thought  
 From purity, and action, and speech,  
 To us may give both wholeness and  
 immortality  
 Ahura Mazda along with (His) Power and  
 Full-Wisdom.

(Gâthâ Spentâmainyu, I. 1.)

Here the name Beneficent Mind (Spentomainyush) is but another word for the Good Mind

(Vohu Manô) and it follows that Angromainyush is therefore another word for Akem Manô, *i.e.*, Evil Mind.

(2) Linguistically considered, the same result follows. 'Angra' is akin to 'Akem' and 'Mainyu' to 'Manô.'

(3) Again if Spentomainyush is the same as Vohu Manô, then he cannot be identified with Ahura Mazda; for Ahura Mazda is said in the Gâthâs to be the father of 'Vohu Manô' (*patarem vanheus mananghô*) (Yasna XLV. 4) and therefore distinct from him. And consequently Angromainyush, being the same as Akem Manô as the opponent of Spentomainyush or Vohu Manô, cannot be the opponent of Ahura Mazda but only of Spentomainyush or Vohu Manô, who is figuratively spoken of as the son of Ahura Mazda and not as Ahura Mazda Himself.

(4) Again in the Avesta and even in the later writings we find that heaven or paradise is in the charge of Vohu Manô and hell in that of Angromainyush. The souls of the departed are believed to be received by them. Both are seen by the departed souls. But it is expressly said about Ahura Mazda that He could be seen by none, not even by the invisible beings. From this also it is clear that Angromainyush is the antagonist of Vohu Manô and not of Ahura Mazda who is above and

beyond them both.

(5) Again in the nineteenth chapter of the Yasna (9), Ahura Mazda is made to say : “Of the two spirits, the Beneficent one said to my whole tribe of the pure.....etc.” Here Ahura Mazda is not identified with Spento-mainyush (the Beneficent Spirit) but is distinct from him, and, therefore, Ahriman cannot be His opponent but that of Spento-mainyush.

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## G

In the Pahlavi commentary of the Vendidad a good specimen is met with as regards this sort of teaching. “Wife, children, property, and authority (we get) through *Fate*, everything else through Industry; that good which is not destined for a man will never reach him.....that which is destined will reach him, but only through his industry.....Owing to his sinning what was (destined) to him will be away from him.....Any suffering destined for him can be turned back by his good industry.....If one becomes a sinner, new (sufferings) will be destined for him.”\* From this passage we find that even these ingenious devices of the commentators lean

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\* Fargard V. 33 ; Spiegel.

more to the pure Zoroastrian doctrine of free will than to entire fatalism.

## H

Of the prayers accompanied by ritual and performed only by priests the chief is 'Yazashna.' The recital of this prayer interspersed with 'Visparad' is a more meritorious performance, while the addition of portions of the 'Vendidâd' to both adds still more to the efficacy and merit of the performance.

DARUN OR BAJ.—It is a short consecrating recital of six chapters of the Yazashna (III.-VIII.) upon sacred unleavened bread, ghee (clarified butter), fruit and water. It is less meritorious than Yazashna.

It appears that, in the time of the Avesta, the Visparad and Vendidâd were performed by ten priests. But now-a-days it is performed by two only. One of them called the Zaoîa or Zoti is the chief reciter. The other is called Ratush or Râspi. The Darûn or Bâj ceremony is performed by one priest only.

MYAZD.—This ceremony is performed on fruits, wine, milk, and flowers on a clean white sheet of cloth spread on clean ground. The officiating priests are two, although several other priests and laymen may take their part in it.

**SATUM.**—It consists of the recital by one priest of the twenty-sixth chapter of Yasna on food cooked with all cleanliness. Strictly speaking, it is no ritual.

Fire must be present at the above ceremonies from 'Yazashna' down to 'Satûm,' and must be kept burning with sandal wood, frankincense, etc. in a big censer.

All the ceremonies in which the consecration of the Darûn, sacred unleavened bread, has a part, must be performed on ground detached from the rest by oblong furrows about an inch or two deep, called Pâvis, which mark out the space within which none but the officiating priests can enter.

**NYAESH AND YASHT.**—These are recitals of certain parts of the Avesta. They can be recited by priests as well as by laymen, and are not accompanied by any ritual, although it seems most probable that the Yashts were recited with sacrifice and ritual on the tops of mountains or high grounds, and the description of the worship of the Iranians given by Herodotus refers to Yashts.

**THE NIRANG-E-KUSTI.**—This is a minor prayer accompanied with a simple ritual of untying and retying the sacred girdle, kustî, on the sacred shirt sadrà, which is worn next to the skin by every Zoroastrian. It is performed several times in a day after washing the exposed hands, face, and feet with

clean water. The washing is called 'pâdyâb.'

GRACE BEFORE AND AFTER MEALS.—The Zoroastrians have an old custom of saying grace before and after meals. It is of three kinds: the higher, the middle, and the minor one. The higher one is only observed by the purified priests, while engaged in the performance of certain most sacred ceremonies. The middle one can be said by any Zoroastrian, but now-a-days it is said only on certain occasions, when certain consecrated food is to be tasted by persons assembled in sacred religious gatherings. The minor one is commonly said by all.

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## J

Of the implements of ritual performed by priests, the following are peculiarly noteworthy :—

Barsom ( A.V. Baresman ) is a bundle of from three to thirty-five metallic wires according to the different grades of ritual, tied with a string made of date-leaf. It is kept in the left hand by the priest, while performing the ceremony. Originally it consisted of twigs of a certain kind of tree woven into a mattress (?) but in later times metallic wires were substituted, as the knowledge of that tree has been lost (?).



Mâhrue (lit. crescent-shaped) is the name of two small tripods, metallic stands, crescent-shaped at the top to hold the Barsom, when not held in the hand by the priest.

Hâvan (Av. Hâvana) is a metallic mortar and pestle to pound the Haoma twigs.

Tasht (Av. Tashta) is a metallic saucer with nine holes in the midst to strain the Haoma juice.

Cups, dishes, and other minor implements are used for holding consecrated water, milk, Haoma juice, etc.

## K

(1) The Atash-e-Dâdgâh can be touched both by priests and laymen, but is not allowed to be touched by non-Zoroastrians. It is the ordinary fire preserved in a fire-temple or even in the house of Zoroastrians and used in sacred ceremonies.—(2) The Atash-e-Adrân is not allowed to be touched by any one but by priests. There is a peculiar ceremony for its consecration. From sixteen or more places such as furnaces of iron-smith, dyer, potter, etc. fires are picked out and brought together. Then certain ceremonies are performed upon them collectively. The fire thus

consecrated is kept in a sanctuary, and the utmost care is used in watching and keeping it perpetually burning.—(3) The highest of all is the Atash-e-Behrâm. Its consecration requires a great deal more of expense and a longer series of ritual, lasting for a year or more. Fires are picked up and collected from various places as mentioned above to which lightning fire must be added. Numerous kinds of ritual, too long to describe here, are continuously performed upon them. At last they are all collected in one big and costly urn. This sacred fire is kept perpetually burning. Its extinction would be regarded as a premonition of a great calamity by the Parsis. It is constantly watched by priests who have undergone the highest purification both of body and mind. It is kept on a stone-altar in a silver or bronze urn, and it is fed only with pure dry wood and other fragrant substances.

When officiating at the fire, the priests cover the lower part of their faces over the nose with a piece of cloth called 'padân,' to prevent the effluvia from the nose and mouth bringing any possibility of defiling it. The 'padân' is also used in various other ceremonies for the same purpose.

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## L

## THE TOWER OF SILENCE

“ Inside the tower walls is a circular platform about three hundred feet in circumference, and entirely paved with large stone slabs, and divided into three rows of exposed receptacles called “pâvis” for the bodies of the dead. As there are the same number of “pâvis” in each concentric row they diminish in size from the outer to the inner ring, and that nearest the Tower wall is used for the bodies of males, the next thereafter for those of females, and the third and last for those of children. These receptacles or pâvis” are separated from each other by ridges called “dandas,” which are about an inch in height above the level of the “pâvis” and channels are cut into the “pâvis” for the purpose of allowing conveyance of all the liquid matter flowing from the corpses as well as rain-water, into a “bhandâr,” or a deep hollow in the centre in the form of a pit, the bottom of which also is paved with stone slabs so as to avoid permeation into the open ground. This pit forms the centre of the tower. When the corpse has been completely stripped off its flesh by the vultures which is generally accomplished within one hour at the outside, and when the bones of the denuded skeleton are perfectly dried up by the powerful

heat of a tropical sun and other atmospheric influences, they are swept into this pit where they crumble into dust—the rich and the poor thus commingling together after death in one mass into a common level of equality. Four drains are constructed leading away to a distance from the body of the pit. They are perforated into the surrounding wall of the “bhandâr” and pass beyond the outside of the tower wall down into four wells sunk in the ground at equal distances. At the mouth of each drain charcoal and sandstones are placed for purifying the fluid before it enters the ground, thus observing one of the tenets of Zoroastrian religion that “the mother earth shall not be defiled.” The wells have a permeable bottom which is covered with sand to a height of five or seven feet. These “dokhmâs” or towers of silence are built upon one plan, but their size may and does vary.”\*

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## M

The names of the five Gâhs as commonly understood at present are : (1) Ushahina, from midnight to the sunrise ; (2) Hâvani, from the sunrise to midday ; (3) Rapithvina, from midday to afternoon ; (4)

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\* See History of the Parsis, by Dossabhai Framji Karâkâ ; Vol. I, pp. 200-201.

Uzayêirina, from afternoon to the appearance of stars ; and (5) Aiwisrúthrema, from the appearance of stars to the midnight.

The names of the thirty days of the month are as follows :—

1. Hormazd, 2. Bahman, 3. Ardibehesht, 4. Shehrivar, 5. Aspandârmad, 6. Khordâd, 7. Amardâd, 8. Dêpâdar, 9. Adar, 10. Avân, 11. Khorshed, 12. Mâh, 13. Tîr, 14. Gosh, 15. Dep-meher, 16. Meher, 17. Sarosh, 18. Rashna, 19. Farvardin, 20. Behrâm, 21. Râm, 22. Govâd, 23. Dep-dîn, 24. Dîn, 25. Ashishvang, 26. Arshtad, 27. Asman, 28. Zamyâd, 29. Mârespand, 30. Anêran.

The names of the twelve months are :—

1. Farvardîn, 2. Ardibehesht, 3. Khordâd, 4. Tîr, 5. Amardâd, 6. Shehrivar, 7. Meher, 8. Avân, 9. Adar, 10. Daê, 11. Bahman, 12. Aspandârmad.

The names of the five intercalary days are :—

1. Ahunavad, 2. Ushtavad, 3. Spendomad, 4. Vohukhshathr, 5. Vahishtoisht.

The names of the twelve 'Jashans' are:—(1) Jashne Farvardiân, on the nineteenth day of the Farvardîn month ; (2) Jashne Ardibeheshtgân, on the third day of the Ardibehesht month ; (3) Jashne Khordâdgân, on the sixth day of the Khordâd month ; (4) Jashne Tîryân, on the thirteenth day of the Tîr

month ; (5) Jashne Amardâdgân, on the seventh day of the Amerdâd month ; (6) Jashne Shehrîvargân, on the fourth day of the Shehrîvar month ; (7) Jashne Mehergân or Meheryân or Meherangân, on the sixteenth day of the Meher month ; (8) Jashne Avângân, on the tenth day of the Avân month ; (9) Jashne Adargân, on the ninth day of the Adar month ; (10) Jashne Daégân, on the first, eighth, fifteenth and twenty-third day of the Daê month ; (11) Jashne Bahmangân, on the second day of the Bahaman month ; (12) Jashne Sapandârmadgân, on the fifth day of the Sapendârmad month. The last is also called Jashne Burzigarân, *i. e.*, the feast of the agriculturists.

The names of the six season festivals, called Gahambârs, are as follows :—

1. 'Maidhyôzarema,' lasting from the 11th to the 15th day inclusive of the second month ;
2. 'Maidhyôishema,' lasting from the 11th to the 15th day inclusive of the fourth month ;
3. 'Paitish-hahya,' lasting from the 26th to the 30th day inclusive of the sixth month ;
4. 'Ayâthrema,' lasting from the 26th to the 30th day inclusive of the eighth month ;
5. 'Maidhyâirya,' lasting from the 16th to the 20th day inclusive of the tenth month ;
6. 'Hamaspâthmaêdaya,' on the last five intercalary days of the year.

The meanings of these names with certain

attributes are as follows :—

Maidhyôzarema Payangh, midspring, the time of juice and milk (*viz.*, in the plants, animals, etc.)

Maidhyôishema Vâstrô-dâtaçnya, midsummer, the time of grasscutting.

Paitish-hahya Hahya, corn and fruit reaping time.

Ayâthrema Fraourvaôshtréma Varshniharshta, the time of ceasing journies, turning down or ending of the warm season, and letting the bulls at rest (?).

Maidhyâirya Saredha, the time of severe damp and winter.

Hamaspathmaôdya Aretô-karethna, the time of equal day and night at the end of the year, when holy religious works are performed.

#### FUNERAL AND OBSEQUIAL CEREMONIES

From the time a person breathes his last till his remains are consigned to the Towers of Silence at least four times the 'Sagdîd' or the dog-gaze must be performed. The custom of presenting a dog before the dead body seems to have come down from a very ancient time. Its origin can be traced to a certain passage in the Vendidad (Fargard VII. 3).

Before washing any man or object defiled by the decomposing dead body, that person or thing is previously washed with 'gômôz,' *i. e.*, cow's urine.

The ceremony, called 'Sarosh,' is performed by

priests partly at the fire-temple and partly in the house of the dead for the first three days.

In the afternoon of the third day a ceremony, called ' Oothamna,' is performed at which all the relatives, friends, and acquaintances, of the dead person assemble, certain prayers are recited, and contributions are made to religious and charitable objects. This ceremony has to be performed on the dawn after the third night according to the Zoroastrian religion, but in practice it has been borrowed from the Hindus, as the name indicates. Some of the advanced Parsis, accordingly, have ceased to perform it in the afternoon of the third day.

On the morning of the fourth day a certain ceremony on behalf of the dead is performed, at which a suit of new white clothes, called ' Jâmê-ê-Ashôdâd,' is consecrated and given in charity to the deserving priest or other holy person.

On the tenth, thirtieth, and the thirty-first days of the death, and on the occasion of the first anniversary of the day of death, *viz.*, on the 365th and 366th day, certain ceremonies are performed ; and to cherish the memory of the dead it is customary to perform a simple ceremony on every succeeding anniversary day.

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# INDEX

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( Numbers refer to pages )

## A

- |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Abân, 160.</p> <p>Abân yasht, 133, 150.</p> <p>Abân Arduisur, 160.</p> <p>Abetment of crime, 60.</p> <p>Abhisâra, 118.</p> <p>Ablution, 77.</p> <p>Abortion, 141.</p> <p>Abtîn, 135.</p> <p>Abuses of the sexual organs,<br/>118.</p> <p>Abusive language, 56.</p> <p>Adarbad Marespandân, 86.</p> <p>Adar, 181.</p> <p>Adultery, 58, 129.</p> <p>Aêshma, 101, 107.</p> <p>Aêthrapaiti, 63, 122.</p> <p>Afrâsyâb, 134.</p> <p>Afrigâns, 13, 47, 143, 145.</p> <p>Afrigân-e-Ardâ-farvash, 143.</p> | <p>Afrigân-e-Dahmân, 143.</p> <p>Afrigûn-e-Gâhambâr, 143.</p> <p>Afrigân-e-Gâthâ, 143.</p> <p>Afrigân-e-Rapithvan, 143.</p> <p>Afrigân-e-Sarosh, 143.</p> <p>Afrîn, 145.</p> <p>Afrîn-e-Ardâfarvash, 145.</p> <p>Afrîn-e-buzurgân, 54.</p> <p>Afrîn-e-Dahmân, 145.</p> <p>Afrîn-e-Gâhambâr, 145.</p> <p>Afrîn-e-Rapithvan, 145.</p> <p>Afrîn-e-Zartôsht, 54.</p> <p>Afsmânî, 10.</p> <p>Agerepta, 58.</p> <p>Aghraçratha, 135.</p> <p>Agriculture, 120.</p> <p>Ahriman, 28, 48, 169, 171.</p> <p>Ahu, 42.</p> <p>Ahuna Vairya, 102, 114.</p> <p>Ahunavad, 181.</p> |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

- Ahunavaiti, 11, 92, 115, 144.  
 Ahura, 8, 70, 103, 137, 148, 161.  
 Ahuratkaêshô, 70.  
 Ahura Mazda, 12, 16, 17, 18, 20, 23, 28, 31, 36, 37, 41, 47, 48, 58, 68, 69, 71, 80, 82, 92, 94, 95, 96, 97, 99, 100, 102, 103, 104, 106, 107, 108, 109, 112, 113, 115, 119, 130, 141, 142, 147, 149, 150, 153, 154, 157, 158, 164, 166, 168, 169, 171, 172, 173.  
 Ahurânî, 161.  
 Ahyâyâsâ, 92.  
 Air, 153, 162.  
 Airyamâishyô, 116.  
 Airyaman, 116, 132, 163, 164.  
 Airyana Vaêjô, 118.  
 Airyâo danhâvo, 2.  
 Airyu, 135.  
 Aiwisrûthrema, 181.  
 Akem Mano, 33, 172.  
 Akhshtish, 46.  
 Al, 161.  
 Alborz, 136.  
 Alexander, 85.  
 Alilat, 161.  
 Alitta, 161.  
 Allah, 8.  
 Alms, 121.  
 Alvend, 84.  
 Amardâd, 181.  
 Ameretât, 21, 23.  
 Ameshâspentâs, 12, 20, 23, 26, 110, 111, 153, 166, 169.  
 Amshâspands, 48, 151, 153.  
 Anaghra Raochâo, 161.  
 Anâhitâ, 160.  
 Anâitis, 161.  
 Anâkhshtish, 56.  
 Ancestors, 62.  
 Ancestor-worship, 167.  
 Ancient Iranian custom of naming persons, 4.  
 Andarimân, 135.  
 Andarje Adarbâd, 145.  
 Andarje Buzorg Meher, 145.  
 Anerân, 156, 181.  
 Angelology, 23.  
 Angels, 114, 153.  
 Angels, presiding, 153.

- Anger, 60.  
 Angirasâs, 107.  
 Angra Mainyu, 6.  
 Angramainyush, 27, 28, 33,  
     34, 41, 43, 72, 102, 105,  
     171, 172.  
 Animal Sacrifice, 66.  
 Anniversary day, 184.  
 Aokhtonâmano, 6.  
 Apâm-Napât, 163.  
 Apaosha, 171.  
 Aparayasna Haptanghâiti,  
     115.  
 Apo, 160.  
 Apo-devi, 161.  
 Apo-Vanguhish, 161.  
 Apparatus or appliances of  
     the soul, 41.  
 Arabs, 146.  
 Arakutos, 118.  
 Aramaiti, 170.  
 Arâiti, 59.  
 Arâstya, 5.  
 Ardai Viraf, the book of, 145.  
 Ardeshir Bâbekân, 85.  
 Ardibehesht, 80, 181.  
 Ardibehesht Jashan, 80.  
 Ardibehesht Yasht, 56, 60.  
 Ardvisura Anâhita, 160.  
 Arejataspa, 4, 135.  
 Arezura, 120.  
 Arjâsp, 135.  
 Arnavâz, 135.  
 Arrogance, 56.  
 Arsh-manangh, 45.  
 Arshtât, 165, 181.  
 Arshukhdho Vâkhsh, 48.  
 Arti, 141.  
 Artisan, 61.  
 Aryaman, 163.  
 Aryans, 28.  
 Aryan and unaryan nations,  
     170.  
 Aryan nature gods, 23.  
 Aryan poet, 21.  
 Aryâs, 162.  
 Asceticism, 93.  
 Asha, 24, 45, 55, 82, 99.  
 Asha Vahista, 20, 22.  
 Ashavazdah, 134.  
 Ashem Vohu, 45, 114.  
 Ashi, 141.

Ashishvang, 141, 165, 181.  
 Ashi Vanguhi, 141, 165.  
 Ashi Yasht, 51, 141.  
 Asma paoirya dâman, 32.  
 Asman, 156, 160, 181.  
 Aspandârmad, 181.  
 Astaothwana, 114.  
 Astodâns, 76, 124.  
 Asura, 154, 161.  
 Asurâni, 161.  
 Atar, 26, 154.  
 Atash, 14.  
 Atash-e-Adrân, 67, 177.  
 Atash-e-Behrâm, 67, 178.  
 Atash-e-Dâdgâh, 67, 177.  
 Athar, 154.  
 Athari, 154.  
 Atharvan, 154.  
 Atharyu, 154.  
 At-fravakhshyâ, 102.  
 Athornân, (pref.) 91.  
 Athrageni, 154.  
 Athravans, 140, 148.  
 Athwya, 135.  
 At-mâ-yavâ, 107.  
 At-tâ-vakhshyâ, 93.

Auramazdâ, 84.  
 Auravataspa, 135, 159.  
 Ausij, 5.  
 Avarice, 56.  
 Avân, 13, 181.  
 Avân Arduisur, 14.  
 Avesta, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14,  
 15, 16, 26, 30, 32, 36, 37,  
 40, 52, 58, 62, 63, 64, 65,  
 67, 71, 90, 91, 115, 136,  
 153, 156, 157, 159, 165,  
 166, 168, 170, 174, 175.  
 Ayâthrema, 183.  
 Azainti, 10.  
 Azhi Dahâka, 134.

## B

Bâbul, 136.  
 Babylon, 136.  
 Babylonians, 159, 161.  
 Bactria, 118.  
 Baghân Yasht, 114.  
 Baghas, 116.  
 Bahman, 79, 105, 181.  
 Bahman Yasht, 133.  
 Bâjs, 117.

Bâkhdhi, 118.  
 Bakht, 37.  
 Bakhtri, 118.  
 Balkh, 118.  
 Bâlist pavan Harvaspa-  
   âkâsi, 17.  
 Baodhas, 39, 42.  
 Barashnûm, 127, 132.  
 Barashnûm-gâh, 127.  
 Barâtûr, 6.  
 Bareh, 37.  
 Barsom, 128, 176.  
 Bawri, 136.  
 Beggary, 57, 118, 121.  
 Beh Din, 9.  
 Behrâm, 140, 163, 181.  
 Behrâm Yasht, 140.  
 Bhandâr, 179.  
 Bhramara, 118.  
 Bokhara, 118.  
 Bravara, 118.  
 Breach of promise, 57, 61.  
 Bribes, 57.  
 Bridge, 128, 152.  
 Buddha, 6.  
 Bundeleshne, 145.

Burning corpses, 119.  
 Burying dead bodies, 118,  
   121.  
 Bûshyâsta, 49, 57, 170.

## C

Cama, K. R., (Prof.), 79, 90,  
   91.  
 Cambyeses, 73.  
 Canals, 128.  
 Canning, the Hon. S. G., 81.  
 Celibacy, 83, 111, 121, 141.  
 Censer, 175.  
 Ceremonial ablution, 71.  
 Ceremonial worship, 110.  
 Ceremony, 132.  
 Chakhra, 119.  
 Charity, 52, 95, 104, 110,  
   184.  
 Chastity, 51.  
 Cheating, 57.  
 Chechasta, 136.  
 Chôjast, 136.  
 Children, 129.  
 Child-marriage, 73.

Chinvat, 42, 152.  
 Chistâ, 140.  
 Chisti, 41.  
 Christ, 6.  
 Christians, 143, 166.  
 Civil and criminal law, 122.  
 Cleanliness, 55, 83, 132.  
 Cobbe, Frances, 2, 86, 167.  
 Cock, 130.  
 Compassion, 46.  
 Confession of faith, 71, 114.  
 Consecrated food, 101.  
 Contract, 122.  
 Corpse-bearer, 120, 126.  
 Council of seven heavenly  
   beings, 23.  
 Covetousness, 60, 61.  
 Cow, 132, 159.  
 Cow, personification of living  
   world, 92, 105, 109, 111,  
   164.  
 Creation *ex-nihilo*, 32.  
 Cruelty, 56.  
 Cultivation, 121.  
 Cuneiform inscriptions, 84,  
   118.

Customs, 147.

Cyrus, 7, 84.

## D

Dâ, 63.

Dabestân, 146.

Dadabhai Navroji, (pref.) 89

Dâdâr, 32.

Dâdestân-e-Dini, 146.

Dâdgâh, 126.

Dae, 7, 79, 81, 181.

Daêna, 27, 42.

Daêna, Mâzdayasnish, 165.

Daêvas, 7, 57, 59, 99, 101,  
   105, 114, 117, 137, 152, 170.

Daêva worshippers, 108.

Daêvayasni, 7, 110.

Dâhishta, 63.

Dahma-Afriti, 116.

Daily prayers, 156.

Dakhmas, 120, 125.

Dândâs, 179.

Dareji, 4.

Darghâidhainish, 4.

Darius, 84, 155.

Darûn, 174, 175.

- Darûn-châshni, 117.  
 Dasâtir, 146.  
 Dastobar, 63.  
 Dastur, 63, 64, 111.  
 Dâtar, 32.  
 Daughters of Ahura, 161.  
 Dawn of the fourth day after death, 40.  
 Days of the month, 79.  
 Defiling of fire, water, or earth with dead matter, 123.  
 Deities, 67.  
 Depâdar, 181.  
 Dep-din, 181.  
 Dep-meher, 181.  
 Destiny, 37.  
 Determination of Zoroaster, 92.  
 Deva, 163, 164, 166.  
 Devotion, 116, 164.  
 Din, 165, 181.  
 Dinkard, 17, 50, 52, 136, 145.  
 Din-yasht, 140.  
 Discord, 56.  
 Dishonesty, 56.  
 Disloyalty, 95.  
 Disobedience, 56, 95, 101.  
 Disposal of the dead, 120, 123.  
 Doctrine of rewards and punishments, 25, 42.  
 Dogs, 128, 129.  
 Dogdô, 4, 47.  
 Dokhmâs, 180.  
 Dressing dead bodies, 124.  
 Druj, 24, 55, 56, 60, 142, 170.  
 Druj-e-Nasush, 170.  
 Druj-e-Zimestân, 171.  
 Dualism, 35, 170.  
 Dushmata, 44.  
 Duty of a Dastur, 111.  
 „ „ rulers, 112.  
 Duzhukhta, 44.  
 Duzhvarshta, 44.  
 Dynasty, Achæminian, 3, 7, 15, 84, 118, 136.  
 „ Hvâfritân, 136.  
 „ Kayâniân, 7, 136.  
 „ Sassanian, 3, 37, 85, 155.

## E

Early rising, 49.  
 Earth, 153, 162.  
 Eating of human corpses,  
     125.  
 Education, 52, 122.  
 Efficient cause of the world,  
     32.  
 Elements, 153.  
 Emigration, 119.  
 Envy, 60.  
 Erach, 135.  
 Erenavâcha, 135.  
 Ershvachão, 48.  
 Erez, 165.  
 Ervad, 63.  
 Eternal punishment, 83.  
 Eternity, 31.  
 Ethics, 44, 61.  
 Etymandros, 118.  
 Evil spirits, 112, 120.  
 Evolution, 32.  
 Exorcism, 127, 170.  
 Extravagance, 59.

## F

Faithlessness, 95.  
 False evidence, 56.  
     „ Justice, 56.  
 Falsehood, 56, 101.  
 Far-reaching object of Zoro-  
     astrian religion, 140.  
 Faredun, 134.  
 Fargard, 12.  
 Farshogard, 43.  
 Farvardin, 5, 80, 181.  
 Farvardigân Feast, 80, 168.  
 Farvardin Yasht, 60, 139,  
     143.  
 Fasting, 83, 123.  
 Fate, 37, 173.  
 Feast of the agriculturists,  
     182.  
 Fee for performing cere-  
     monies, 101.  
 Fees of physicians, 125.  
     „ „ the purifier, 127.  
 Ferdosi, 69.  
 Festival, 81, 158.  
 Fight of the twins, *i. e.*, good  
     and evil, 105.



- Final triumph of good over evil, 93.  
 Fire, 96, 98, 114, 115, 126, 128, 153, 154, 156, 163, 164, 175, 177.  
 Fire, kinds of, 154.  
 Fire-temples, 67, 126, 177.  
 Fire-urn, 178.  
 Fire worshippers, 67, 69.  
 First Great cause, 21.  
 First month of the religious year, 79.  
 Five great creeds of Asia, 2.  
 Five Nyââshes, 13.  
 Fornication, 118.  
 Franghrasyân, 134.  
 Fraoreti, 114.  
 Frâruni,  
 Frashôkereti, 43, 97.  
 Frastuyê, 45.  
 Fravashi, 39, 40, 41, 80, 114, 139, 143, 167, 168.  
 Free choice of faith, 93.  
 Free will, 38, 42.  
 Frêni, 5.  
 Fryâna, 104.
- Fshûshô-Mâthra, 116.  
 Funeral, 74, 126, 183.  
 Funeral ceremonies, 183.  
 „ clothings, 75.
- ## G
- Gabriel, 165.  
 Gaêthya stish, 32.  
 Gâhs, 13, 14, 79, 180.  
 „ five, 14.  
 Gâhambârs, 80, 182.  
 Gâhân-sarâyashni, 75, 144.  
 Gandarewa, 135.  
 Gao, 164.  
 Gaochithra, 159.  
 Garebân, 70.  
 Garô-demâna, 42.  
 Garothmân, 151.  
 Gâthâ, 3, 10, 11, 12, 16, 18, 20, 21, 23, 24, 28, 29, 30, 32, 36, 37, 40, 42, 48, 52, 53, 55, 56, 57, 59, 60, 64, 68, 69, 72, 76, 81, 90, 92, 93, 105, 110, 111, 112, 115, 116, 123, 127, 144, 153, 157,

- 159, 160, 163, 164, 166, 169, 170, 171.  
 Gaya, 29  
 Gaya Maretan, 134, 139.  
 Gayomard, 134, 139.  
 Ghosts and goblins, 40.  
 Golden mean, 59.  
 Gômêz, 183.  
 Good Religion, 83.  
 Gorgân, 118.  
 Gosh, 164, 181.  
 Goshte-Fryân, 134.  
 Gospand, 48.  
 Gôvâd, 181.  
 Grace, 176.  
 Greeks, 65.  
 Greek authors, 4.  
 Gujasteh, 85.  
 Gushtâsp, 5, 7, 134.  
 Gustaham, 134.
- H**
- Hâ, 11, 18, 92, 114.  
 Habub, 134.  
 Hâdokht-nask, 47.  
 Haêtumant, 118.  
 Hair and nails, 129.  
 Hamaspathmaêdaya, 183.  
 Hamkar, 166.  
 Hang-i-Afrasiab, 136.  
 Hankanê, 136.  
 Haoma, 66, 113, 124, 128, 135, 162, 177.  
 Haoma yasht, 113.  
 Haoshyangha Paradhâta, 134.  
 Hapta Hindu, 119.  
 Haptanghâiti, 158.  
 Hara-barezaiti, 136.  
 Haraiva, 118.  
 Harakhvaiti, 118.  
 Haranvati, 118.  
 Hard-heartedness, 56.  
 Hari, 118.  
 Haroyu, 118.  
 Hârût, 118.  
 Harvispa-âkâs, 17.  
 Harvisp-âgâh, 17.  
 Hatred and destruction of the wicked, 96.  
 Haurvatât, 21, 23, 153.  
 Hâvan, 177.

Hâvana, 113, 177.  
 Hâvani, 180.  
 Hâvishta, 62.  
 Hazô, 58.  
 Health, 123.  
 Heaven, 172.  
 Helios, 156.  
 Hell, 108, 112, 152.  
 Helmand, 118.  
 Helping coreligionists, 122.  
     „ the good and defeat-  
     ing the evil, 93.  
 Help to the helpless, 52.  
 Herât, 118.  
 Heretics, 130.  
 Herodotus, 62, 69, 73, 175.  
 Hierarchy, 166.  
 High priests, 11, 63.  
 Hindus, 73.  
 Hoar-frost, 118.  
 Holy man, 98.  
 Hom, 135.  
 Honesty, 45.  
 Hormazd, 8, 13, 151, 181.  
 Hormazd yasht, 17, 132, 149.  
 Hoshang, 9.

Hoshang Peshdâd, 134.  
 Hoshbâm, 116, 156.  
 Hospitality, 54.  
 House of worship, 120.  
 House of a holy man, 120.  
 Hû-ahûih, 50.  
 Hûkhta, 44, 70, 82.  
 Hûmân, 134.  
 Humata, 44, 70, 82.  
 Husbandman, 51, 61, 109.  
 Hutaosha, 5, 135.  
 Huvarshta, 44, 70, 82.  
 Hvâfrîtân, 136.  
 Hvâfrîtô, 136.  
 Hvare, 155, 156.  
 Hvarechithra, 5.  
 Hvôgva, 105.  
 Havovas, 134.  
 Hvôvi, 5.  
 Hypochondria, 118.  
 Hypocrisy, 60, 95.

# I

Idleness, 121.  
 Illness of Zarathushtra, 107.  
 Immorality, 44.

Implements, 128.  
 Indigence, 123,  
 Indolence, 57.  
 Indra, 163, 170.  
 Industry and diligence,  
     48, 120, 173.  
 Inebriation, 59.  
 Infection, 124, 125.  
 Infinity of space, 37.  
 Infinite Time, 37.  
 Influence of woman, 112.  
 Inhospitality, 104.  
 Injunction to destroy noxious  
     animals, 48.  
 Injury to the innocent de-  
     nounced, 95.  
 Injustice, 56.  
 Intercalary days, 79, 143, 182.  
 Iran, 133, 155.  
 Iranians, 9, 21, 27, 30, 33,  
     66, 68, 73, 119, 153, 155,  
     159, 162, 164, 170, 175.  
 Isatvâstra, 5.  
 Isfandiâr, 135.  
 Israelites, 88.  
 Izad, 26.

## J

Jâdû, 171.  
 Jahi, 58.  
 Jâmâspa, 5, 105, 111, 134.  
 Jâmê-ê-Ashôdâd, 184.  
 Jâm-e-kaikhusro, 146.  
 Jamshed or Jamshid, 9, 99,  
     119, 134.  
 Jamshedi Navrôz, 79, 143,  
     158.  
 Jashan, 80, 181.  
 Jashane Adargân, 182.  
     „ Amardâdgân, 182.  
     „ Ardibeheshtgân, 181.  
     „ Avâgân, 182.  
     „ Bahmangân, 182.  
     „ Burzigarân, 182.  
     „ Daôgân, 182.  
     „ Farvardiân, 80, 181.  
     „ Khordâdgân, 181.  
     „ Meherangan, 182.  
     „ Mehergan, 182.  
     „ Meheryân, 182.  
     „ Rapithvan, 143.  
     „ Shehrivargân, 182.

Jashane Spandârmadgân, 182.

,, Tiryân, 161.

Jews, 143, 166.

Justice and impartiality,  
48, 62.

## K

Kadimis, 87, 133.

Kae Gushtâsp, 5, 134.

Kaikhusro, 134.

Kaikobâd, 135.

Kalema, 8.

Kalema of the Mohamedans,  
8.

Kâma, 42.

Kâm-Khûtai, 42.

Kâm-na-maêzâm, 103.

Kandarû, 135.

Kangdez, 136.

Kangha, 136.

Karaka, Dosabhai Framji,  
180.

Karapans, 5, 101, 107, 111.

Kardâ, 12.

Karkh, 119.

Karsivaz, 135.

Karshvars, 137.

Katâyun, 135.

Kat-moi-urvâ, 108.

Kaus, 134.

Kavi Husrava, 134.

Kavi Kavâta, 135.

Kavis, 5, 101.

Kavi Usan, 134.

Kavi Vishtâspa, 5, 134.

Kayanian, 7.

Kem-nâ-Mazdâ, 46, 104, 109.

Keresâspa, 132, 134.

Kercsavazda, 134.

Kersâsp, 134.

Khanjast, 136.

Khnâthaiti, 118.

Khnenta, 118.

Khordâd, 5, 181.

Khordâdsâl, 5, 80.

Khordeh Avestâ, 11, 13, 145.

Khorshed, 13, 181.

Khorshed Nyâesh, 136, 151,  
156.

Khorshed Yasht, 136, 137.

Khrafstras, 48.

Khratu, 41.

Khshthra-Vairya, 20, 22, 153.

Khurshed, 6, 14.

Khvaêtumaiti, 94.

Khvaêtvadatha, 72.

Khvâirizem, 136.

Khvâparih, 50.

Khvareno, 142.

Khvârizm, 136.

Khveshkâri, 49.

Khshmaibya, 92.

Kusti, 9, 69, 70, 157, 175.

## L

Last ten days of the year, 80.

Laws of Ahura, 8.

„ „, purity, 119.

Laymen, 66, 71, 91, 175.

Libation to waters, 114.

Liberality, 52.

Light, 132, 153, 155, 156, 159.

Lightning, 154, 163, 178.

Lohrâsp, 135.

Love and respect for parents,  
&c., 47.

Loyalty, 47.

Lying, 56, 101, 112, 139, 170.

## M

Mâdigân-e-Gosht-Farian, 145.

Madressa, Mulla Fîrûz, 91.

„ Sir Jamsetji Jiji-  
bhai, 91.

Magavan, 111.

Magi, 62.

Magôpaiti, 63.

Magus, 63.

Mâh, 13, 156, 159, 181.

Mâhbakhtâr, 14.

Mâh Nyâêsh, 159.

Mahommedans, 8, 143, 166.

Muhammed, 8.

Mâhrue, 177.

Maidhyâirya, 182.

Maidhyômâh, 5.

Maidhyômâongha, 111, 139.

Maidhyâshema, 183.

Maidhyôzarema, 183.

Maimonides, 166.

Mainyo-i-Khard, 48, 61, 145.

Mainyava Stish, 32.

Malice, 56.

Man, constitution of, 38.

- Manas, 39, 41.  
 Manas paôirya dâmân, 32.  
 Manus-chithra, 135.  
 Manya, 69.  
 Marâteb, 63.  
 Mârespand, 166, 181.  
 Margiana, 118.  
 Margu, 118.  
 Marriage, 72, 73, 74, 116,  
     122, 128, 145, 163.  
 Married life, 122, 132.  
 Marzhdika, 46.  
 Material impetative cause,  
     32.  
 Mâthra, 27, 132.  
 Mâthra-spenta, 152, 166.  
 Maula, 161.  
 Mâzana, 130.  
 Mazda, 7, 8, 9, 16, 21, 26, 28,  
     37, 53, 61, 68, 93, 98, 100,  
     102, 105, 147.  
 Mazdayasna, 68.  
 Mazdayasni, 7, 69, 86, 112,  
     169.  
 Mazdayasni religion, 38.  
 Mâzdayasni Zarathushtri, 7.
- Mazdayasno, 70.  
 Mâzendarân, 136, 170.  
 Meanings of the names of  
     Gahambars, 182.  
 Meat, 128.  
 Medes, 62.  
 Medicine, 125, 132.  
 Meher, 14, 158, 181.  
 Meherdaruji, 57.  
 Meher Dâvar, 137.  
 Mehergân, 159.  
 Meher Nyâôsh, 137.  
     „ Yasht, 137.  
 Menstruation, 78, 119, 129,  
     131.  
 Mercy, 46, 96.  
 Merv, 118.  
 Messengers of Ahura Mazda,  
     108.  
 Metempsychosis, 40.  
 Mihir Yasht, 57, 70.  
 Minoohihr, 135.  
 Miscarriage, 129.  
 Miserliness, 59, 104.  
 Mithra, 28, 50, 137, 156, 158.  
 Mithra druj, 137.

Mitra, 28, 158.  
 Mitra-Varuna, 158.  
 Mobed, 63.  
 Monotheistic creed, 24, 26,  
     28, 29, 36, 81.  
 Moral courage, 101.  
 Morality, 44.  
 Morning of the fourth day,  
     184.  
 Mother, 62.  
 Mourning, 120, 127.  
 Mouru, 118.  
 Mukttât, 80.  
 Municipal affairs, 120.  
 Mul, 161.  
 Murder, 58.  
 Myazd, 14, 174.  
 Mylittâ, 161.  
 Myths of ancient times, 4.

## N

Nâhid, 162.  
 Nakshi-Rustam, 84, 155.  
 Namâz, 99.  
 Nâm-sitâyeshn, 152.

Names of Ahura Mazda and  
     Amshaspands, 133, 147.  
 Names of the twelve months,  
     79.  
 Naotaras, 134.  
 Naremanâo, 135.  
 Narimân, 135.  
 Nasâ-sâlârs, 76, 121.  
 Nâsatya, 170.  
 Nâvar, 63.  
 Navroji Furdunji, 89.  
 Navzôt, 69, 70, 130.  
 Neglect of proper clothing,  
     130.  
 Negligence, 60.  
 Next-of-Kin marriages, 72.  
 New year's day, 80.  
 Nirang, 144, 145.  
 Nirang-e-Kusti, 14, 65, 71,  
     133.  
 Nirangistân, 145.  
 Nisâ, 118.  
 Nisaya, 118.  
 Nodar, 134.  
 Non-Gâthic Avesta, 15.  
 Noshabeh, 127.



Noxious animals, 120, 121,  
128, 130.  
Nyâêsh, 13, 175.

# O

Oaths, 137.  
Obedience, 95, 116, 164.  
Obsequial ceremonies, 183.  
Offerings, 66.  
Omission to discharge debt,  
59.  
Omnipresence of God, 103.  
One thousand and one names  
of God, 133.  
Oothamna, 64, 184.  
Origin of evil, 93.  
Ormazd, 8, 13, 151.  
Ostî, 62.  
Ostô, 62.  
Ouranos, 28.

# P

Padân, 178.  
Pâdyâb-Kusti, 9, 176.  
Pahlavi-Pâzend books, 17,

85, 90, 91, 143, 145.  
Pahlavi translations, 145.  
Pairikas, 118, 171.  
Paitish-hahya, 183.  
Paitizbara, 4.  
Pâki-e-tan, 55.  
Partiality, 56.  
Patet-e-Adarbâd, 47, 144.  
,, Irâni, 54, 144.  
,, Irâni-e-Ravâni, 144.  
,, Pashemani, 144.  
,, Ravâni, 144.  
,, Khud, 144.  
Patience, 100.  
Patmân, 59.  
Pâvi, 76, 175, 179.  
Pâzend, 16, 65, 71, 74, 133,  
144.  
Peace, 46.  
Pemâni Pahlavi, 48, 58, 60,  
145.  
Perjury, 57.  
Persipolis, 85.  
Personal Assault, 58.  
Piety, 95.  
Pirân, 134.

Place of cultivation, pasture,  
and gardening, 120.  
Place set apart for flocks and  
herds, 120.  
Place where manure is pre-  
pared, 120.  
Platonic "ideal," 41.  
Polytheism, 28, 30.  
Pouruchisti, 5, 72, 112.  
Pouru-dhâkhsti, 134.  
Pourushaspa, 4, 47.  
Pride, 60, 95.  
Priest, 49, 61, 62, 66, 71, 75,  
122, 130, 174, 175, 176, 178,  
184.  
Prince of Evil, 6.  
Procrastination, 57.  
Professional Corpse-bearers,  
75, 76.  
Propitiating both the good  
and the wicked denounced,  
95, 99.  
Prostitution, 58, 141.  
Protection to the Virtuous, 96.  
Public and private bene-  
ficence, 54.

Punishment, 123.  
Purifications, 13, 100, 124,  
125, 126, 131.  
Purifier, 127.  
Purity, 55, 61, 83, 123, 140.  
Purity of elements, 74.

## R

Rae, 4, 119.  
Raga, 119.  
Ragha, 4, 119.  
Rahnumâi Mâzdyasnân Sabhâ  
(pref.), 89, 90, 91.  
Rainwater, 132.  
Râiti, 52.  
Raja of Sanjân, 74.  
Râm, 181.  
Rapithvina, 80, 143, 185.  
Rashna, 181.  
Rashnu, 165.  
Râspi, 174.  
Râst Dâvari, 48.  
Ratush, 174.  
Ravân, 39.

- Ravâyats, 147.  
 Rectitude, 165.  
 Regard for inferiors, &c., 47.  
 Religious Calendar, 79.  
 Religious ceremonies, 100.  
 Religious festivals, 79.  
 Religious mendicancy, 83.  
 Religious Reforms, 90.  
 Religious year, 78.  
 Remuneration to learned priests, 122.  
 Renovation of the World, 97.  
 Renunciation of the World, 83.  
 Repentance for sin, 46.  
 Resignation in adversity, 46.  
 Resignation, 100.  
 Resurrection, 143.  
 Revelation, 131.  
 Revenge, 56.  
 Reward and punishment, 97, 101, 104, 110, 111, 137.  
 Right government, 106.  
 Righteousness, 57.  
 Ristâkhêz, 43, 142.  
 Ritual, 66, 78, 108, 147, 178.  
 Robbery, 58, 61, 106.  
 Royalty, 48, 64.
- S**
- Sabbath days, 80.  
 Sabians, 146.  
 Sacred bread, 66.  
 Sacrifice, 128, 164.  
 Sad-dar, 147.  
 Sadrà, 66, 69, 130, 175.  
 Saggid, 183.  
 Sairima, 135.  
 Salvation, 44.  
 Sâma or Sâm, 135.  
 Sâmas, 132.  
 Sanitation and hygiene, 55, 120.  
 Sanjân, 74.  
 Saoshyants, 35, 43, 97, 107, 131, 139.  
 Saptâ Sindu, 119.  
 Sarosh, 116, 144, 164, 165, 181.  
 Sarosh Bâj, 144.  
 Sarosh Darun, 113.  
 Sarosh Yasht, 116, 144.

- Sarosh Yasht Hâdôkht, 48.  
 Sarva, 170.  
 Sassanian, 3.  
 Satum, 175.  
 Savanghavâcha, 135.  
 Sâyuzdri, 134.  
 Season-festivals, 80, 143,  
 182.  
 Segregation, 77.  
 Selem, 135.  
 Self-help and self-reliance,  
 51.  
 Self-mortification, 83.  
 Seminal discharge, 130.  
 Sermons of Zoroaster, 93,  
 102.  
 Serpent, 118.  
 Serving both good and evil,  
 107.  
 Seven holy names, 20, 21.  
 Shâh-nâmeh, 69, 133.  
 Shahrnâz, 135.  
 Shâpur II, 86.  
 Shâristân-i-chârchaman, 146.  
 Shâyast-lâ-shâyast, 145.  
 Shehenshâhis, 87.  
 Shehrivar, 181.  
 Shkyaothna, 42.  
 Show-bread of the Jews, 117.  
 Signs of religion, 111.  
 Sikand-i-Gumâni Vijar, 53,  
 145.  
 Sind, 119.  
 Sin, 121, 123, 125, 128, 141.  
 Sipâsees, 146, 147.  
 Sir Jamsetji Jijibhai, 91.  
 Sirius, 160.  
 Sirozah, 144.  
 Sitâyashes, 145.  
 Sitâyesh-e-Banâm-e  
 Hormazd, 47.  
 Six Afrigâns, 14.  
 Skaitya, 118.  
 Slander, 60, 61, 95, 104, 129.  
 Slaughter, 103, 106, 108.  
 Slothfulness, 57, 60.  
 Sodomites, 111, 126.  
 Sogdiana, 118.  
 Sol, 156.  
 Soma, 113, 162.  
 Son of Ahura Mazda, 154.  
 Sorcery, 61.

- Soul, 40, 42, 43, 132, 164,  
 167, 168, 172.  
 Spendomad, 181.  
 Spenta Armaiti, 20, 23, 153,  
 162.  
 Spentâmainyû, 11, 105, 115,  
 171.  
 Spentô-dâta, 135.  
 Spentô-mainyush, 33, 35,  
 102, 105, 117, 171.  
 Spitama, 3, 57, 138.  
 Sraosha, 45, 50, 99, 164.  
 Staota Yasnya, 116.  
 Stiff-neckedness, 56.  
 Still-born child, 77.  
 Stone-altar, 178.  
 Strange gods, 112.  
 Study, 122.  
 Style of the poetry of the  
 Gâthâs, 22.  
 Sughd, 118.  
 Sughdha, 118.  
 Suguda, 118.  
 Sun, 136, 137, 159, 164.  
 Suphies, 146.  
 Supplications of Zoroaster, 92.
- Supreme, First Cause, 21.  
 Surat, 74.  
 Sûrya, 156.  
 Syâvarshâna, 135.  
 Syâvash, 135.  
 Symbols of worship, 26, 98.
- T**
- Takhma urupa, 135.  
 Tan-i-pasin, 43.  
 Tanu, 39.  
 Tanu-peretha, 58.  
 Tasht, 177.  
 Tarômaiti, 170.  
 Tat-thwâ-peresâ, 99.  
 Tâ-vê-urvâtâ, 94.  
 Tâyu, 58.  
 Tehmuras or Temurasp, 9,  
 135.  
 Temptations of Zoroaster,  
 94.  
 Tenderness and regard for  
 useful animals, 48.  
 Tenets of Zoroastrianism,  
 120.

Thankfulness in prosperity,  
46.

Theft, 58, 106, 123.

Theism, 20.

Theosophic and mystic  
Persian writers, 146.

Thief, 58.

Thirty-three angels, 166.

Thraêtaona, 134.

Thriftiness, 59.

Thrita, 132.

Thriti, 5.

Thwakhshangha, 48.

Tir, 181.

Tishtrya, 156, 159, 160.

Tishya, 160.

Tower of Silence, 75, 76,  
144, 179.

Trials by ordeals, 123.

Trikâla Sandhyâ, 157.

True evidence, 48.

True Justice, 48.

True path of religion, 97.

Trust in God, 97.

Truthfulness, 48, 107.

Tûra or Tûr, 135.

Turanian, 104.

Tûsa or Tûs, 134.

## U

Unbelief in religion, 60.

Unchastity, 141.

Uncleanness of earth, 124.

Unleavened bread, 113, 117.

Unnatural crime, 58, 118.

Urghûn, 118.

Urvâ, 118.

Urvan, 39, 41, 167, 168.

Urvânô, 167.

Urvatatnara, 5.

Urvâzishta, 154.

Ushâ, 155, 156,

Usha Bâmya, 156.

Ushâh, 156.

Ushas, 156,

Ushahina, 180.

Ushi, 41.

Ushtâna, 39.

Ushtavad, 181.

Ushtavaiti, 6, 97, 115.

Usikhsh, 5, 101.

Uzava Tumâspa, 135.

Uzayêirina, 181.

## V

Vachas, 41.

Vadhaghan, 6.

Vaêkereta, 118.

Vaêska, 134.

Vâe Vatar, 162.

Vâe Veh, 162.

Vahishtôisht, 181.

Vahishtôishti, 11, 111, 116.

Vaimanasya, 118.

Valkhash, 85.

Vandaremaini, 135.

Vanguhi Daena, 8.

Varejamkard, 120.

Varena, 119, 170.

Varharân, 163.

Varkâna, 118.

Varuna, 28, 154, 158.

Vasô, 42.

Vâta, 162.

Vayn or Vâyu, 162.

Vâzishta, 154.

Vedas, 28, 153, 154.

Vehrkâna, 118.

Vendidâd, 11, 12, 28, 49, 51,  
52, 53, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60,  
63, 72, 77, 78, 117, 119,  
124, 149, 150, 173, 174, 183.

Venus, 161.

Verethraghna, 163.

Vernal Equinox, 143, 158.

Verses, 113.

Veseh, 134.

Vicarious redemption, 83.

Vicarious salvation, 42,

Vices, 55.

Victory, 140, 163.

Victory of the good over evil,  
106.

Vidaêvô, 70.

Violence, 106, 107.

Virtues and merits, 45.

Vishtâspa, 4, 5, 92, 99, 104,  
111, 134.

Visible forms of God, 158.

Visparad, 11, 12, 54, 174.

Visp-âkâs, 17.

Visp-tûbân, 17.

Vispa-Khûdâe, 17.

Vispa-veh, 17.  
 Vispān-sût, 17.  
 Vispān-vispa, 17.  
 Vistauru, 134.  
 Vohufryāna, 154.  
 Vohukhssthra, 11, 110, 115,  
 181.  
 Vôhu mano, 20, 33, 153, 172.  
 Vologeses, 85.  
 Vow of Zoroaster, 92.  
 Vritrahan, 163.

## W

Warrior, 49, 60.  
 Wasp, 118.  
 Waste of anything valuable,  
 124, 126.  
 Waste of human semen, 111.  
 Water-dog, 128.  
 Waters, 115, 117, 153, 160.  
 Wealth acquired lawfully  
 and spent praiseworthily,  
 141.  
 White colour, 70.  
 Wicked One, 8, 102.

Winter, 118, 120.  
 Wisdom, of two kinds, 152.  
 Wolf, 128.  
 Woman, 124, 125, 129, 140.  
 Worship, 110, 120.  
 Worship of natural objects,  
 167.  
 Worship, Vedic, 169.

## X

Xerxes, 84.

## Y

Yaozhdâthra, 55.  
 Yashts, 13, 29, 132, 133, 175.  
 Yâ-shkyaothnâ, 96.  
 Yasna, 11, 13, 17, 32, 55, 56,  
 58, 59, 60, 92, 93, 94, 95,  
 96, 97, 99, 102, 103, 105,  
 107, 108, 110, 111, 112, 117,  
 133, 150, 164, 172, 175.  
 Yasnâ Haptanghâiti, 115.  
 Yathâish-itha, 95.  
 Yâtus, 171.  
 Yazashna, 174.



Yazata, 6, 13, 24, 26, 29, 137,  
145, 151, 153, 154, 155, 156,  
158, 160, 162, 163, 164, 165,  
166, 167.

Yenghó Hâtām, 114.

Yezidâ, 105.

Yima Khshaéta, 134.

Yôishta Fryâna, 134.

## Z

Zairimyangura, 53.

Zairivairi, 135.

Zamyâd, 142, 181.

Zamyâd yasht, 142.

Zand-i-Bahman yasht, 146.

Zaotâ, 114, 174.

Zarathushtra, 3, 8, 11, 47, 51,  
58, 93, 99, 103, 104, 105,  
107, 110, 111, 131, 134, 140,  
141, 147.

Zarathushtra Spitama, 3, 6,  
11, 23, 104, 110, 123, 127,  
131, 139, 152.

Zarathushtra Spitama's  
advice to marrying couple,  
112.

Zarathushtra Spitama, the  
age of, 7.

Zarathushtra Spitama, anni-  
versary of, 5.

Zarathushtra Spitama, birth  
place and birthday of, 4.

Zarathushtra Spitama, coad-  
jutors of, 5.

Zarathushtra Spitama, death  
of, 7.

Zarathushtra Spitama, oppo-  
nents of, 5, 103.

Zarathushtra Spitama, the  
predecessors of, 9.

Zarathushtra Spitama, rela-  
tions of, 5.

Zarathushtra Spitama, sons  
and daughters of, 5.

Zarathushtra Spitama, with-  
stands temptations, 6.

Zarathushtra Spitama's will  
or testament, 111.

Zarathushtrish, 70.

Zarathustrôtemô, 64.

Zardasht-e-Afshâr, 146.

Zarîr, 135.

Zarthosti-Dînnî-Khol-Karna-  
rî-Mandî, 91.

Zartosht-i-Spitaman, 3.

Zartosht Nâmeh, 147.

Zem-hudâo, 162.

Zend, 10, 114.

Zend-Avestâ, 9.

Zohak, 6, 134.

Zoroaster, 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9,

10, 13, 18, 20, 21, 22, 24,

26, 28, 29, 30, 32, 35, 38,

40, 42, 48, 52, 55, 64, 68,

70, 71, 72, 81, 82, 84, 85,

90, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97,

98, 99, 102, 103, 105, 106,

109, 110, 131, 157, 159, 160,

164, 169.

Zoroastrian ideas of the  
middle ages, 146.

Zoroastrian Religion, 84.

Zoroastrian Religion, earlier  
adherents of, 1.

Zoroastrian Religion, litera-  
ture of, 1.

Zoroastrian Religion, present  
adherents of, 1.

Zoroastrian Religion, the  
name of, 7.

Zarvan Akarana, 31, 37.

Zarvan Dareghô-Khvadhâta,  
31.



